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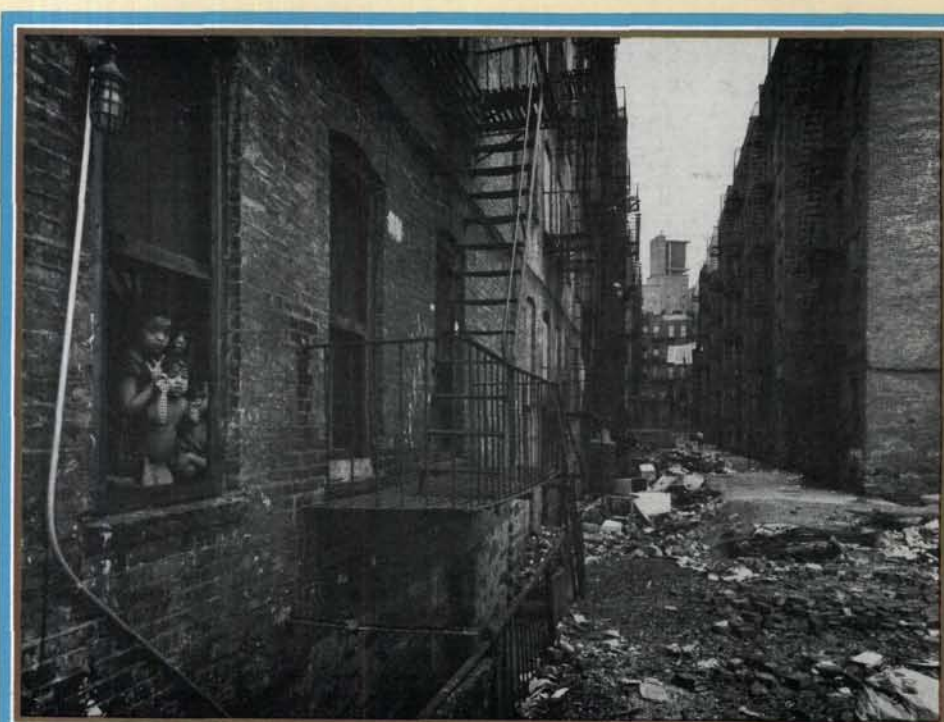
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THE NEW REPUBLIC

February 26, 1977

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from Washington
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Food and Shortages

A couple of handsome Mexican soldiers weighted down with gold braid stood ramrod straight on either side of Mexico's President Lopez Portillo the other day in the ballroom of the National Press Club before he spoke. They were symbols of authority, the human equivalent of ruffles and flourishes, and reminded us that other nations aren't practicing the simplicity of the Carter blue-jeans administration.

President Portillo's elegant translator, with a personality of her own, gave his speech in bits and snippets with such flair that I got the illusion that she was delivering the address for herself and composing it as she went along. The speech was an earnest appeal for assistance from the big neighbor of the north, as Mexico seeks stability. Only with such stability, he reminded us, will the rush of illegal Mexicans across the 2000-mile border ("3000 kilometers" in Mexican terms) slow down. The Texas border is the safety valve for Mexico, which has one of the highest growth rates in the world.

So many things these days lead back to that global problem of food and population—for instance, two recent official reports by US commissions that have received practically no attention. Orphan commissions are a feature of Washington; they are wandering around all the time usually taking testimony, their origins obscure and their purpose nearly forgotten, nobody pays attention till they issue a "final report" just before they expire. They are lucky to get a paragraph or two even then. These two have a vague connection and deserve consideration for contrasting reasons.

The "Domestic Council Committee on Illegal Aliens" was a last fling of the Ford administration and has a connection with Mexico. Its 250-page report was put out almost surreptitiously. It is the best recent study I know of what

illegal aliens are doing to the US unemployed, to the welfare roles and to the taxpayers. Chairman of the task force was former Attorney General Levi.

Most Americans don't know, and don't want to know, the impact that immigration (legal and illegal) is having on population growth, as the decline of the domestic birthrate continues. Legal immigrants now account "for about 30 percent of the population growth," the council's report says, and on top of that there are the illegals. "Illegal immigration is significant and growing," the report says. Theoretically the US has an "exclusionary immigration policy" but the report says this is "ineffective." In practice, it says, "we have a very open immigration system" with a trend that is "likely to grow." The chief effect of this is competition "with native workers, particularly with the minimally skilled and under-employed." They mean blacks, but don't say so. The report is written in detached, colorless, matter-of-fact language.

Just to throw in a statistic, the report says that in 1975 "766,600 aliens who had entered or remained in the US illegally were located, about twice the number permitted to enter by law." That means that for one legal there are two illegals. Nobody seems to be particularly interested in this subject nor is there any strong movement to do anything about it. Cheap labor, of course, has its political supporters, and an illegal alien isn't going to do much protesting about under-minimum wages or bad housing, and he isn't going to join one of those trouble-making trade unions.

One estimate is that there are about eight to 10 million illegals in the US at the present time; just about the same number as unemployed. That brings up the question of poverty-racked Mexico again. President Portillo told John B. Oakes of *The New York Times* the other day that the economic condition of one-third of Mexico's 63 million people is "marginal," which means that they can just eke out a living. What happens when there are twice that number in 20 years, one can only guess: one projection is that Mexico City will be the largest metropolitan aggregate in the world. The Domestic Council says Mexico is "a major source" of the illegals; in a calm, even tone it outlines the futile effort of the 1600-person US Border Patrol to keep back the flood.

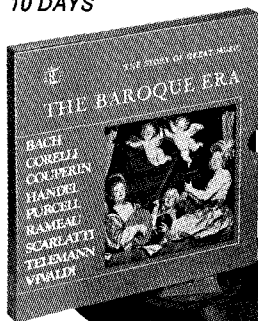
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(continued on page 30)

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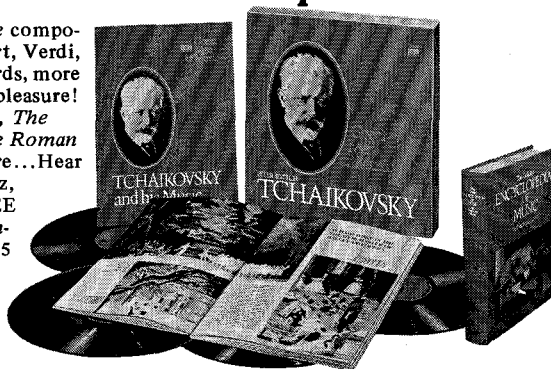
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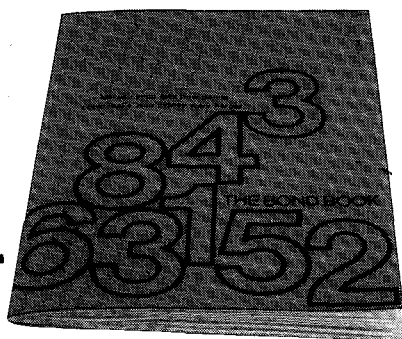
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THE NEW REPUBLIC



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How Not to Limit The Arms Trade

The same newspaper bringing the news that the US is cancelling a promised sale of CBU-72 bombs to Israel also reported that the South Africans would soon be manufacturing atomic weapons. For this they are in the debt, not of that enterprising senior at Princeton, but of our own government which over the years has channeled enriched uranium and scientists to the Pretoria branch of the nuclear aspirants club. This confluence of news is only the latest evidence that there isn't much logic to who is and who isn't at the receiving end of America's largesse with military capability.

Retarding the arms race in the Middle East is a worthy goal, indeed a necessity, and Israel should not be immune from the process. We applaud President Carter's intentions. But what Carter has done in breaking the commitment his predecessor made to Israel may not have the salutary effect on the prospects for peace in the region that his advisers persuaded him it would. Politically, the move casts doubt on the credibility of US undertakings to Israel. Any significant territorial concessions Israel is asked to make in negotiations must be predicated on the assumption that American guarantees are reliable, and that one administration will not renege on the promises of a previous one. This is exactly what Carter said while he was campaigning, but it has not guided his behavior in his administration's first major act affecting the Arab-Israeli dispute. Former President Ford and former Secretary Kissinger thought the sale of the CBUs, which are particularly effective against hardened missile sites, aircraft revetments, minefields and tank clusters, was needed to help maintain the regional arms balance that had been upset by the transformation of primitive Saudi Arabia into a modern military power. The balance was always a precarious one. It assumed that Israeli technological superiority could neutralize the colossal numerical advantages the Arabs enjoyed in

weapons and troops available for battle. But the general modernization of the Arab world, the possession of advanced weapons systems by all of the combatants, and the emergence of Saudi Arabia as a possible confrontation state (and almost certainly a supplier state) in another war has altered all of the old calculations.

If Carter is genuinely intent on limiting the arms race he should, having cancelled the CBU transaction with Israel, move also to curtail some of the bloated trade in arms with the Arabs. Of particular interest here are the 1600 laser-guided Maverick missiles and more than 100 F-5E aircraft capable of carrying them that the Saudis have contracted for (see "Arms Peddling," *TNR*, Oct. 2, 1976 and "Arms and More Arms," *TNR*, Oct. 16, 1976). This would be a sign of high seriousness and of the kind of even-handedness which is quite appropriate to our function as peace broker in the Middle East.

But even if he were to do that, Carter quickly would find that unilateral American restraint on arms sales cannot materially affect the influx of new and ever more dangerous weapons systems into the region. To be sure, the only arms route to Israel is via the United States. To that extent at least, the security of the Israelis is in our hands. But what we might refrain from selling to Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and other countries, they can get from the British (desperate now for cash), the French (eager for it under any circumstances) and the Soviets (whose political ends always are served by an arms imbalance in favor of the Arabs). The arms race in the Middle East can be stopped only if the other big arms sellers are willing for it to be stopped. President Carter might do well to make Russian cooperation on this matter a measure of whether detente can actually be made to work in that part of the world where the peace is actively and perpetually threatened.

From Pillar to Post

Recent headlines proclaiming that the Postal Service made a profit in the last quarter of 1976 and won't raise its prices for 1977 should not be taken at face value. There will be staggering price increases for everyone in 1978, and even 1977 brings no relief for those of us in the publishing industry.

The Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 was intended to make the Postal Service a break-even business by assuring that each class of mail paid its own way. Second-class users were given a "phasing period"—nine years for most magazines—in which to adjust to radically higher rates. But this brief respite depends on Congress to appropriate funds each year to pay the difference. President Ford failed to include in his last budget the \$223 million needed to cover "phasing" for next year, and so far Office of Management and Budget director Bert Lance has not amended the budget to include this money. We urge him to do so.

Even if this money comes through, and despite the headlines about no postal price increases this year, an increase for second-class mail is scheduled for July. For a small journal like *TNR*, the 1977 increase will amount to 25 percent, or \$1000 a week. In fiscal 1971 second-class mail users (excluding the so-called non-profits) paid \$128 million in postage. In fiscal 1979 they will have to pay \$475 million, plus whatever additional increases the Postal Service imposes between now and then.

One problem with the Postal Service is that it is too often considered in isolation from the other services performed by the government. The Postal Service would increase its revenue by adding services (such as "meals on wheels" or delivery of medicines to Medicare patients) related to functions already performed by the government. The simple step of lowering postal rates would increase mail volume and thus create new jobs. An administration exploring expensive new job programs should take a new look at the Postal Service as a structure for the creation of new jobs that would be truly useful to society.

Self-anointed savior of a nation
wallowing in malaise and scandal

Israel's Mr. Clean

Jerusalem

In an hour of national malaise Israel has produced its own Bible-quoting candidate to challenge a political establishment mired in bossism, clubbiness, bureaucracy and corruption. He appears in the

aftermath of a disillusioning war and in an atmosphere of scandal. Israel's Watergate in fact is just bursting open, increasing the appeal of his promises of candor, purity, independence and efficiency. His platform is a bit vague; but it includes government reorganization, a strong foreign policy in relation to both friends and enemies, economic reform, more openness and democracy, a return to idealism and a restoration of trust.

Political pros give him little chance to win. But he has this advantage over Jimmy Carter: few people in Israel have to ask "Yigal who?" Yigal Yadin is virtually a household name here. His lean frame, weathered face, mustache and bald head are familiar to everybody who has been looking at newspapers during the last 30 years. He was military chief of staff in Israel's 1948 war of independence. When Yadin left the army Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion offered him his choice of government offices and pronounced him—and him alone according to a Ben-Gurion biographer—"worthy to be prime minister."

But Yadin foresook politics, except for special service in times of crisis, to follow his father into archaeology. He can read the Bible in original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, and could translate it if he had to into English, Arabic, German, French or Latin. He is a front-rank Old Testament scholar, but more: he is a headline-making archaeologist—even a political one. Do Christians somewhere still use religion as an excuse to hate Jews? The Essene Dead Sea Scrolls, which Yadin acquired and has studied, undermine prejudice by suggesting a direct link between Jesus's teachings and a branch of Judaism. Is there doubt in the world about the legitimacy of Jewish domination of Palestine? Yadin's discoveries have reconfirmed the heroism of Jews who died for their land: the zealots who slew themselves atop Masada in 73 A.D. rather than submit to the Romans; and the followers of the legendary Bar-Kokhba, who starved in Dead Sea caves in 135 A.D. during the second Jewish revolt against Rome.

The events are all ancient, but Yadin has been drawing continuous lessons from them for Israel. Addressing Israeli armor corps recruits at their traditional swearing-in ceremony at Masada, Yadin once declared, "We stand here today no longer helpless against the might of our foes, no longer putting up a last desperate stand in a war already lost, but firm, proud and with quiet assurance, knowing that our fate lies in our own hands, in the strength of our spirit which is the re-awakened spirit of age-old Israel." That was in 1963, even before Israeli self-confidence had reached its zenith in the aftermath of the Six-Day War of 1967. Nowadays Yadin quotes from different scripts: a letter from Bar-Kokhba to an oasis encampment that was inattentive to the Roman danger: "In comfort you sit, eat and drink from the property of the house of Israel," the stern commander wrote, "and care nothing

(continued on page 8)

Correspondence

Honor the ordinary

To the editors:

John Osborne may be right in his suspicion that "most other Americans" are like him in wanting "a touch of the imperial in the presidency" ("Staffing Up," *TNR*, Jan. 29). But I hope not.

I want Jimmy Carter to keep up the good exercise of walking up Pennsylvania Avenue. I want him to continue to carry his own suit-bag—no matter how he looks while he does it. And I certainly hope he'll carry out his "threat" to wear blue jeans in the oval office—or bathrobe or shorts. And I'll feel better if he has everyone in the world call him "Jimmy" rather than "Mr. President."

I would much prefer any President of the United States show in habits little and big a deep respect for the ordinary people in this country. For the sake of the common good no one need honor any office. What all of us need—including those of us who hold offices of whatever kind—is to honor the ordinary people of the world who hold no offices and have no titles.

Rev. Reid Bush
Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church
Louisville, Kentucky

Pleasing changes

To the editors:

As a *New Republic* reader for these past several years, I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the pleasing changes in the magazine. The layout is exciting, and the editorial content has improved greatly.

TRB, of course, is and always will be my favorite columnist. You are also fortunate in having the best Washington analyst in print, John Osborne.

I wish you the very best of luck in publishing one of the finest periodicals available.

John L. Rouse
Editor
Bowie (Md.) News

Rooting for Roots

To the editors:

Your item in the February 5 "Washington Diarist" about TV's "Roots" is pretty sad and arrogant, a demonstration of the intellectual's problems with communications that speak to millions.

Your reporter can never have seen "The Waltons." Rape, brutal whippings, a foot chopped in half to prevent escape? No smell of a slave ship when the stench loomed so large in all the dialogue?

Sure the blacks were wholesome, enduring and heroic, and the whites were sadistic, lecherous or remotely powerful and rigid. There was much of the soap opera in the series, but a group of us who watched together found "Roots" a significant step forward for TV. And if newspapers are to be believed the series was rewarding for ghetto blacks.

Clifton R. Read
Cornwall Bridge, Connecticut

A Zbig by any name

To the editors:

In the "White House Watch" in *The New Republic* of February 5: Zbigniew Brzezinski's nickname "Zbig" is pronounced s'Big and not, as John Osborne elegantly but so inaccurately wrote, s'pig.

Irene Sulikowska
Queens, New York

In reply:

"Zbig" as spoken at the White House doesn't come to my ear that way. Brzezinski and his spokesman, Jerrold Schecter, didn't object to my rendering when I met them a day or so after they'd seen it in print.

John Osborne

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for your brothers." Yadin quotes from proverbs: "Where there is no vision the people cast off restraint." And sounding like an Old Testament figure himself, he lashes and sounds apocalyptic warnings: "The very existence of our country depends on reform." Israel has been living "a lifestyle of hypocrisy. . .disregarding the values of Zionism and ignoring the dangers of war." The current government has "failed because it lacks the outrage to sacrifice its own interest to the interest of the state." In person Yadin sounds less shrill and more professorial than newspaper clippings make him out. But there is no question he thinks the existing Israeli political system doesn't work, and probably never will.

There is good evidence that he is right. The Labor alignment—itsself a coalition of four mutually suspicious segments—has ruled only by coalition with smaller parties during practically all of Israel's existence, giving sometimes tiny minorities veto power over important government policy. Strong leaders have been able to hold their factions in harness, but the current establishment is unable to do even that. Labor has been steadily losing strength in Israeli elections—it is down to 50 seats in the 120-member Knesset—and figures to drop yet more in the May 17 vote. One of the key issues dividing Labor's two candidates for prime minister, incumbent Yitzak Rabin and defense minister Shimon Peres, is which of them will lose less. Rabin claims he can prevent a hemorrhage because the country respects his success in negotiating settlements with the Arabs and managing Israel's increasingly dependent relationship with the United States. Peres, with help from former foreign minister Abba Eban, is trying to blur his hawkish image; his supporters claim their man can present a more inspiring image to the country on television.

Labor chooses its new leader February 23 in a manner and in an atmosphere that only highlights the party's crisis. Primaries are unknown in the Israeli political system. Instead, 2901 Labor stalwarts—2300 delegates chosen in party-only caucuses plus 601 central committee members—will gather in Tel Aviv, listen to Rabin and Peres, then vote. Behind-the-scenes bargaining for support has been furious, of course, with both Rabin and Peres supporters accusing the other side of making political threats and exorbitant promises. Voting is by secret ballot, so neither camp will know which of its importunings had effect. A delegate is free to offer himself to both sides and lie to one about whom he will support. Once the leader is elected a new central committee will be chosen and will draw up the party's list of 120 Knesset candidates. The scramble for top positions again will be frenzied because even optimists figure no more than 45 will make it to office. On May 17 voters will not get to choose individual candidates; they must pick a whole national list. A party gets its people into the Knesset in proportion to its draw in the

election. There is no geographical representation. The emphasis in list-drawing is on rewarding party hacks rather than promoting bright young stars. Yadin, who favors election of individual members by district, calls Israel's present system "the least democratic of any enlightened country" in the world. Even people who are used to it call it "Bolshevik." In the event he fails to become prime minister, Yadin is pledged to electoral reform as his price for joining a coalition with any other party.

Elections are only the beginning of Israel's problems, according to Yadin; Labor has managed to stay in power for 29 years, and power—Yadin reminds—corrupts. No reminder is necessary after last week, when Asher Yadlin, former head of health services for the Histadrut labor federation, confessed he had accepted bribes and bucketed much of the money into Labor party coffers. Yadlin—a kind of Israeli John Dean—accused three top party officials of urging him to do it, including finance minister Yehoshua Rabinowitz. Yadlin's accusations were denied, of course. They followed the earlier shock of the suicide of housing minister Avraham Ofer amid corruption charges.

The Yadlin affair is likened to Watergate here but Israel's scandal may be worse. No one really suspects that Rabin or Peres will be roped in personally, but everyone thinks there is rot in the Labor party through and through. Parties in Israel are not only political entities but "movements" which own businesses, make investments and run schools, health services, old peoples' homes and sports teams—all generating and using money which a set of smart accountants can shift back and forth. Labor is in close alliance with the Histadrut, which in turn isn't only a trade union federation but also owns the biggest industrial complex in Israel. Labor also is tied to the Jewish Agency, which acted as the Jewish governing body of Israel before there was an Israel, and which now oversees welfare services. Combining its ancillary enterprises with its governmental power to tax, make laws and let contracts, Labor has had great power. Sizeable portions of the electorate believe with Yadin that Labor's power has led to its corruption. There are other problems in Israel that contribute to the general malaise. Immigration—the lifeblood of Zionism—is down to a trickle. Inflation is near 40 percent. Unemployment is high for Israel at five percent. At any time, those workers not on strike, especially in the public sector, seem to be threatening one, Italian-style. Productivity is poor. The country's economy is growing scarcely at all: the latest figures showed one-and-a-half percent a year. Because of Israel's giant military outlays—35 percent of its total national output—taxes are the highest in the world. It is widely thought that nearly every taxpayer who can do so cheats.

So what is the answer for Israeli voters? One option is for them to leave Labor in droves this May and join the permanent opposition, the Likud. That party's

leader, Menachem Begin, said in an interview that after losing eight straight elections there is finally a chance that he can nose out Labor, emerge leading Israel's first party and be asked to form a government. But there are problems with the Likud, too. Yadin charges that Begin's party, so long in opposition, has come to be part of the same system as Labor only in smaller degree. Its ticket-selection process is no more democratic than Labor's. Though Likud members crowed wildly in the Knesset after Yadin's confession, there have been irregularities in Likud financing as well. Finally, Israeli voters may wonder whether a right-wing Likud government, unmoving in relations with the Arabs, would not cause a breach in relations with the United States. As Yadin puts it none too happily, "We must realize that most of our income does not come from our own earnings but from Uncle Sam."

Yadin says he aspires, through economic reforms and higher productivity, to a decrease in Israeli dependence on the United States. He says this would be good for both sides of the relationship. At the same time, one senses Yadin would try to be less flexible under US diplomatic pressure than the present government is. One of Yadin's close advisers said, "With the present government when you push a little we give a little. With Yadin you will know there is a red line beyond which we will not budge." Yadin himself is not so direct. But he said he thinks the United States and Israel should reach a better understanding about what their mutual interests are. He does not like it that many Americans seem to think the "Jewish Vote" and sentimental attachment to the Middle East's only democracy are the reasons for the US-Israeli alliance. "I want Americans to see a strong Israel as an asset," he said. "I do not believe an alliance can last unless its interests coincide."

So far as can be determined, Yadin's outlook on specific negotiating points with the Arabs does not differ greatly from that of the Labor alignment. However he is unwilling to part with the West Bank except in a final peace settlement. And he absolutely rules out creation of any separate entity in the West Bank that is not part of Jordan.

So is Yadin the answer? Well, probably not, at least not this time. Yadin has come from nowhere with a surge. Starting late last year his movement has attracted 15,000 dues-paying members, and polls indicated pre-Yadin-scandal that it might win as many as 25 seats in the Knesset. Yadin has managed to rattle the central core of Israeli politics. Rabin has denounced him as a "Messiah . . . suddenly discovering rot everywhere . . . a false prophet." Peres, though he has been in politics for 20 years, 17 longer than Rabin, suddenly has discovered himself to be a force for "change." With all his accomplishments, though, Yadin has political problems. He will get nothing like the rich government financing that Labor and Likud have voted for themselves—about \$60,000 for each Knesset member—to help them stay in office. Nor will Yadin get

any of the tightly-controlled television time that is allotted to contenders for prime minister according to the number of seats their party won in the last Knesset election. Yadin will have to do with private donations. He has other problems, too. Though his supporters deny it, most of his following tends to be clustered in upper-middle income brackets where intelligence is high but where the number of votes is not. One highly visible group of Jews of North African origin is supporting him, but he seems not to have dented the mass of Oriental Jews that make up more than 40 percent of the electorate. Nor has he attracted much allegiance among workers. His establishment opponents are spreading word he is a "snob," and "elitist," a "professor," a "Mr. Clean." Yadin also is not much of a politician. He let it be thought he would be most likely to form a coalition with Labor, thereby offending potential voters in the Likud and independents who wanted him to leave room for hard swipes at the ruling alignment.

With 40 percent of the Israeli electorate still undecided about the election, nothing is predictable. What the Israelis and their friends most hope for is that by some combination a lead party will form a stable coalition, most probably with Yadin included. What they most fear is that nobody may be able to put 61 solid votes together, leaving Israel in the drifting condition that now besets her, and rendering her unable to escape her malaise.

Morton Kondracke

White House Watch **The Other Carters**

This is a report on what the other Carters at Jimmy Carter's White House are up to.

There are plenty of them: Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, of course; nine-year-old Amy, in the fourth grade at an integrated public school near the White House; James Earl (Chip) Carter, III, aged 26, and his wife Caron, who is expecting their first baby in early March; Donnell Jeffrey (Jeff) Carter, 24, who is majoring in geography at George Washington University in Washington, and his wife Annette; and "Cousin Hugh" Carter, Jr., 34 and single, who is the only one of the resident family pack who doesn't live at the White House.

Rosalynn Carter's press secretaries, Mary Hoyt and Ann Anderson, handle public relations for everybody in the family except the President. They are sufficiently aware of an undercurrent of discontent with the presence in the White House residence of the nearest thing to a complete presidential family, married adults included, since Franklin Roosevelt's time to be mildly

defensive about it. Hoyt and Anderson argue, irrelevantly, that nobody grumped about Chip, Jeff and the oldest Carter son, Jack, a lawyer who lives with his own family in Calhoun, Georgia, residing intermittently at the state mansion in Atlanta when Jimmy Carter was governor of Georgia, working for Jimmy when he was both candidate and governor, and campaigning for him in 1975-76. The relevant fact is that even Chip and Caron, the only son and daughter-in-law who were living in Plains when Jimmy Carter campaigned and was elected, had their own home there. Jeff was a student at Georgia State University in Atlanta and he and his wife moved from there to the White House.

Hoyt and Anderson note correctly that the President pays for his sons' and their wives' food and other entirely personal expenses, but that defense is weakened by the lack of any estimate of how much this costs and by the free lodging and housekeeping services they get. Mary Hoyt is probably close to the mark when she observes that this is an age of family dispersion, when adult offspring normally leave their parents' homes as soon as they can afford it. There's something, she suspects, about the Carters suddenly coming back together at the White House that is *different* and therefore resented.

Cousin Hugh is the son of Hugh Carter, Sr., the President's first cousin, boyhood companion and successor in the Georgia Senate. In one of his puckish moments, which are frequent, Press Secretary Jody Powell dubbed the younger Carter "Cousin Hugh." When Powell was asked what were Hugh Carter, Jr.'s qualifications to be the President's special assistant for administration, the answer was, "If you're the President's cousin, do you need any?" It was a joke, but it reflected a certain embarrassment among Carter assistants who do not consider Cousin Hugh to be one of their more brilliant associates and feel that such a clear case of nepotism harms the President. In two interviews and several telephone conversations with Cousin Hugh, I judged him to be a sharp and competent fellow. He holds a master's degree in business administration from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, and he left the vice presidency of a bank check printing company in Atlanta to join the White House staff. A valid cause for embarrassment has gone unnoticed. Four people—Cousin Hugh; cabinet secretary Jack Watson; staff secretary Rick (for Richard) Hutcheson; and Richard Harden, special assistant for White House organization and budget—split responsibilities that in the Ford administration were adequately handled by one man, cabinet and staff secretary James Connor (with some assistance, of course). It's an elaborate way of simplifying the White House organization, to say the least.

Cousin Hugh's chief initial assignment has been to chop staff services and costs, and he's still at it. During a talky, telefilmed ramble along Plains's Main Street on February 12, President Carter said that Cousin Hugh

had, among other things, reduced annual newspaper subscription costs by \$40,000 and withdrawn most of some 300 television sets he found in White House offices. Hugh Carter said later that newspaper costs will be reduced eventually from around \$60,000 to \$20,000 per year, and other periodical costs by about \$10,000 a year. One of the 50 television sets to be retained is in his office. In some offices (though not his) the sets are equipped with the remote controls that Nixon and Ford assistants enjoyed. The surplus sets will be sold. Assistants who have sets can still get taped replays of key newscasts from the Army-staffed White House Communications Agency.

Cousin Hugh has cut the White House motorcar fleet from 50 to 36, including 19 trucks and other service vehicles and 17 staff sedans. The President continues to ride in a big Secret Service limousine. It's a demure tan instead of the previous spectacular black. At the President's order, said to reflect Jimmy Carter's conviction that the White House is his and his family's house, Cousin Hugh has restricted staff access to the mansion living quarters. This inspired erroneous rumors that he'd forbidden staff passage through the mansion ground-floor corridors between the East and West office wings and had stopped letting VIP tourist parties look into the President's Oval Office when he's absent. Restrictions are tighter than they were under Nixon and Ford, but they don't contradict President Carter's promises of an open White House to the extent that the rumors suggest.

Some of Cousin Hugh's economies have had comical consequences. Visitors to the offices of the President's news summary staff, consisting of four writers under Claudia Townsend, a former Washington correspondent, spot the television sets on which the major network news shows are monitored and huddle around for the pleasures they have been denied in their own offices. Rosalynn Carter's staff of 18 in the East Wing is permitted a single copy of selected newspapers, principally the *Washington Post* and *Star*, *The New York Times* and the *Atlanta Constitution*. Clippings are photocopied and passed around to interested staff members, a procedure that causes one to wonder where the saving is.

Rosalynn Carter is easing cautiously and slowly into the activist role that she and the President have projected for her. Her spokespersons, as Hoyt and Anderson try to remember to call themselves, say that she has mainly concentrated upon getting her staff organized, screening the hundreds of requests for her to be honorary chairperson of organizations dedicated to good works, and putting together the President's Commission on Mental Health, which she will head and which will have been announced when this is read. Her daughter Amy has been mostly and mercifully ignored by the media since she enrolled in a Washington public school. Some 12,000 letters to Amy have arrived at the

White House. Most of them are boxed and still unread, though they eventually will be acknowledged by a correspondence staff that was reduced and merged with the President's staff before anyone comprehended the volume of family mail that would have to be dealt with. Enough of Amy's letters have been scanned to indicate that most of them are congratulations from children, along with advice from adults who think they know how a President's daughter should be raised.

Chip Carter, the most resented of the family residents, represented his father on a visit to snow-cursed Buffalo and stated that there was lots of snow there. The Democratic National Committee pays him \$8000 a year plus expenses for part-time fund raising and arranging party speakers. His wife Caron campaigned for her father-in-law and is said to be busting to get into active work with Rosalynn Carter once the baby arrives and that's behind her. Brother Jeff is reported to be an excellent photographer who has practiced on the family and intends to enroll his wife Annette in photography courses. She's said to be shy, hard to coax into public work and appearances. Rosalynn Carter's staff hopes to produce her in useful roles.

The President's wife does what she can for the Equal Rights Amendment and spends 15 hours a week learning Spanish from tapes and two Foreign Service Institute instructors. She's avoided the press since the inauguration. Overwhelming demand from journalists for interviews caused her to invite a batch of them, mostly women and a few males, to tea at the White House on February 15. It was a gracious occasion, she was grace itself, and nothing much came of it. I don't mean to be catty, but what else is there to say at this point? Damn all.

John Osborne

You're the Cremora in My Postum The Soy of Cooking

If you are a supermarket bum like me, prone to loiter in the aisles scrutinizing shelves and shoppers, you can hardly have failed to note the steady rise in the number of convenient food substitutes. Some have been with us long enough now to qualify, perhaps, as foods in their own right. Oleomargarine, for instance, was first concocted by Hyppolyte Mège-Mouriès during the infamous Paris butter shortage of 1869, taking top honors in the butter-substitute contest sponsored by the Emperor Napoleon III.

Bacos and Cremora, though with less glamorous histories, have likewise won permanent perches for themselves on your supermarket rack. Soy-extended

hamburger, on the other hand, introduced with a bang in the beef price crisis of the early '70s, seems to have fallen just short in its bid for popular esteem. Perhaps the public as a whole came to the same conclusion as Julia Child when she remarked, "I like my beans on the side."

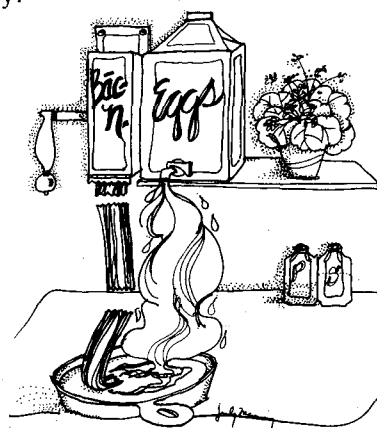
But we have not heard the last of the meat substitutes. One current entry, from Monfort of Colorado, is Steak Tonight, a simulated steak product made from, of all things, hamburger, with a flavor and texture very much its own. A significant attribute is that no matter how much you cook a Steak Tonight, it remains the same attractive deep red in the center.

The spice counter has long been a hotbed of imitations, too, such as McCormick's Imitation Butter-Flavored Salt. "Add the flavors of butter and salt to foods with one easy shake of Imitation Butter-Flavored Salt," says the shaker. This fills a real void. How many times have you sat down to a meal only to realize you have left the butter or the salt (but not both) in the kitchen? How many times have you worn out your wrist pouring and spreading?

Lately I have observed a certain flagging of industry and ingenuity on the part of the manufacturers of these food substitutes. Perhaps, I have thought to myself, they have simply run out of ideas. Perhaps they are waiting for a clear signal from the eating public to get cracking again. Accordingly, I have conducted a personal on-site survey of my supermarket—Shelton's of Twelfth Street—in search of more foods which are, as nature hands them over, unhealthy, unpleasant or downright inconvenient.

Here are the most pressing needs uncovered by this privately financed study:

Bac-n-Eggs. My first nomination, beyond being a real early morning time-saver, has the advantage of requiring no new technology. We already have imitation bacon. We already have imitation eggs (though none with separate white and yolk; but that's



drawing by Judy Manning

another matter). The novelty of Bac-n-Eggs is the handy twin dispenser for your kitchen wall—on one side, a liquid low-cholesterol egg substitute, on the other a continuous roll of soy-protein bacon, with a crank and a serrated cutting edge.

I-Scream is an imitation ice cream product which is not only low in cholesterol and calories, as you might expect, but remains solid at temperatures of up to 200 degrees Fahrenheit, thus doing away with annoying

teeth chatter and insuring the consumer against refrigerator failure and those long mid-dessert phone calls.

Rice-Alike is a simulated rice for people who have to restrict their intake of Vitamin B. (Made from recycled newspaper, so it's environmentally safe.)

Once these obvious candidates are out on the shelf, we can move on to lower-priority items like an imitation yogurt for those who enjoy the healthy taste and texture of yogurt, but want to maintain a bacteria-free diet. And a simulated artichoke with no sharp points to endanger your children.

James Lardner

James Lardner is a Washington eater.

A volcano bound to rumble and erupt

Dissent in Czechoslovakia

In December 242 Czechoslovak citizens, among them participants in the ill-fated "Spring of 1968," affixed their signatures to a document "regretfully" detailing their government's failure to honor the human rights provisions of the Czechoslovak Constitution, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference on European Security. The document, titled "Charter 77," was ready on January 1, and on January 6 some of its signatories attempted to present it to the Czechoslovak Premier, the Chairman of the Federal Assembly, and the Czechoslovak News Agency. Copies of the document were confiscated, and some of its authors detained. "Charter 77" then was sent to the same officials through the mails, but it remained unacknowledged. So the signatories sent it to the Western (including Communist) press. At this point the Czech media swung into action. The document, said *Rude Pravo*, was nothing but a call for "the dismantling of socialist democracy" and for the "restoration of bourgeois capitalism." Its authors were "standard bearers of subversion," "renegades," "venal tricksters," "pharisees," "political shipwrecks" taking their orders from "anti-communist and Zionist centers" abroad. These ringing words were instantaneously endorsed by all other newspapers, by Prague Radio and TV, and by "the working people of Czechoslovakia," meeting "spontaneously" (so it was reported) throughout the country. And so yet another witchhunt was on.

That a document of this sort should have been signed

by so many people (soon to exceed 300) might have come as a surprise to Czechoslovakia's leaders. But the existence of restiveness and courage within the country is something they have been acutely aware of. As Alan Levy pointed out in a perceptive article in *Index on Censorship* (London, Autumn 1976), "Czechoslovakia is the only country in Eastern Europe where a real opposition exists. The surviving leaders of the Prague Spring and the half-million members expelled from the Communist Party comprise a shadow Cabinet and a shadow Party with more support and experience than those who hold the cards and the titles today." During the past few years, a number of former political leaders and prominent intellectuals—among them Alexander Dubček, the philosopher Karel Kosík, the historian Vilem Precan, the novelists Ludvík Vaculík and Ivan Klima and the playwright Vaclav Havel—have addressed open letters to the authorities, given interviews to foreign newsmen, and published articles in foreign newspapers and journals. In addition, there is a lively samizdat network within the country, known as Padlock Press, which has circulated more than fifty books by well-known authors proscribed by the censors. All this activity has survived the various efforts to suppress it.

Yet Czechoslovak dissidents, while eloquent and outspoken, have scrupulously refrained from formulating their complaints in overtly political terms. Czechoslovak intellectuals have not asked their government to carry out social and economic reforms or to institute political pluralism, but to respect human rights and individual dignity, to put an end to witless prosecutions, and to enter into a dialogue with those for whom the moral health of the country is more important than a political program or ideological slogans.

"Charter 77" carries on the same tradition. It documents and asks for an end to violations of freedom of expression and religion, to denials of the right to emigrate, and to politically motivated prosecutions. At the same time, "Charter 77" goes out of its way to deny any intention of engaging in political activity, of "raising its own program for political or social reforms or changes." Its proclaimed aim is to enter into "a constructive dialogue with the political and state authorities."

Verbal violence is as traditional in countries under Soviet-style regimes as is cherry *pirog*. Yet the Czechoslovak leaders *do* have some cause for alarm this time: despite the efforts of the "Charter" signatories to avoid being charged with "conspiracy," their very number raises the specter of an "organization"; and although the rejection of political aims is unquestionably genuine, Husák and his allies cannot but recall (as indeed *Rude Pravo* has already pointed out) that the "Prague Spring" also began with a seemingly apolitical revolt by intellectuals, particularly writers, in 1967. The fact that the signers have appealed directly to

the "Euro-Communists" is not exactly good news either. The Italian and British Communists already have rebuked the Czech government. Even the French Communists, who only a few years ago denounced Artur London's *Confession* as "anti-socialist propaganda," now have joined in the chorus.

Finally, it has not escaped the Prague authorities that "Charter 77" came out on the eve of the Belgrade conference on European security, which in June is to review the results of the Helsinki Final Act; and that it coincided, too, with the advent of a new American administration, more forcefully committed to a defense of human rights than its predecessor. Both Washington and Moscow have expressed their concern about the developments in Prague: the first by publishing a formal statement criticizing the Czech government for its repressive actions against the signatories of the "Charter," and the latter by quietly cautioning its allies not to get carried away by their heady rhetoric. The Soviets, of course, have their own (and familiar) problems: on the one hand, they are anxious not to spoil their "case" against US violations of the Helsinki agreements, which they hope to present in Belgrade. On the other, they cannot easily tolerate the burgeoning activities of their own dissidents, especially those of the various groups that have made it their business to monitor their government's record on Helsinki. Hence the latest arrests, detainments and searches in Moscow and the Ukraine, and the expulsion of George Krimsky, an AP correspondent with a discomfiting command of the Russian language and an equally discomfiting knowledge of the dissident scene. Mass arrests and trials, however, coupled with murmurs of discontent among the still faithful in Rome and Paris, are hardly in Moscow's interest right now.

Probably because of all these diverse pressures, the Czech authorities apparently decided to refrain from taking drastic measures against the dissidents. In recent weeks, the official press have been at pains to stress that while "violations of legality" will be punished, "nobody in Czechoslovakia has been penally persecuted or punished for their political or philosophic opinions." This is palpable nonsense, of course, as are claims that some of the signatories, such as the writer Pavel Kohout, fearing deportation, have now declared that they are "happy in Czechoslovakia and are not afraid of persecution." And although the campaign is still on, the Czech press has now taken to referring to the "Charter 77" in the past tense, a "failure" and a decisive "defeat" at the hands of the party and the entire nation, more closely "rallied" around the party than ever before. It is likely, therefore, that Prague would like to see the dust settle, at least for the time being.

Yet a respite, if it comes, is not apt to endure. The spokesmen of "Charter 77" continue to speak out and to give interviews to Western correspondents, and more people have now signed the document, too: there

are over 500 by now, among them a large number of industrial workers. All told, the recent events in Czechoslovakia—as well as, for that matter, in Poland, Hungary and East Germany—provide a striking illustration of how fragile is Communist legitimacy in Eastern Europe. Mr. Gierek (as he recently made it known) may be prepared to pardon the protesting workers in his country, and Dr. Husak may try to call off the dogs, but both will continue to preside over empires which, like extant volcanoes, are bound to rumble and erupt.

Maius Bergman

Maius Bergman writes on Soviet and Eastern European affairs.

Divining the secret of Carter's foreign policy

The Third Alternative

Does the Carter administration have a foreign policy? All we have heard from it so far has been an unsorted collection of single-issue declarations, often contradictory. We have been told for example that nothing is more important than SALT, but we also have been told that nothing is more important than the Atlantic Alliance. The new President has been loud in his criticism of the late policy of detente, and equally loud in proclaiming the urgency of its prompt resumption with goals more ambitious than ever—the abolition of nuclear weapons, no less.

But perhaps one can after all discern the outlines of the Carter foreign policy in the fragmentary evidence of certain slogans insistently repeated, and in the known views of some of the President's men. A major clue is the explicit rejection of the Republicans' "balance of power" policy in favor of a new and undefined policy called "world order." Of course the policy followed intermittently after 1969 was in some sense a balance-of-power policy, but it was never regarded by its protagonists as their *chosen* policy. Rather it was viewed as the second-best policy imposed by circumstances—Indochinese circumstances that is. The policy of the Republican years, in fact, can be seen as the second in a triad of foreign policies imposed by changing historical circumstances. Carter's emerging policy, if my theory is correct, would be the third.

A great capital of public support for an activist foreign policy accumulated during the tranquil years of the 1950s. President Kennedy set out to use this inheritance to preserve the third world for the first. Johnson was the wastrel who exhausted what the rhetoric of Dulles, the authority of Eisenhower and good fortune all had earned. In a logical progression,

the continued activism of Richard Nixon could lead only to bankruptcy. Kennedy, Johnson and the early Nixon all tried to pursue the same foreign policy, whose dominant characteristic was unilateralism: the United States was to assert its benevolent influence and its leadership of the non-Communist world in order to defend American values and American interests, largely through American power alone. So long as public opinion was willing to pay any price, to bear any burden, there was no need to compromise American values and no need to abandon American interests anywhere.

It was not to be. The policy of unilateral activism required the abundant use of power. All the power that could be needed could still have been extracted easily enough from a society so highly productive, but when the essential sanction of popular opinion was gradually withdrawn the policy had to be abandoned. Dr. Kissinger was called upstairs and given effective control of foreign policy. Reverting whenever he could to the more ambitious policy of the 1960s, but mostly deprived of the means to carry it out, Kissinger's second-best alternative was a balance-of-power policy in which the less central values must inevitably be compromised, and the more marginal interests must inevitably be abandoned, in order to protect what is vital. Under the earlier policy of unilateral activism, the main antagonists were to be squarely opposed, and the power of lesser enemies was to be crushed. In the unhappy circumstances of the early 1970s, the lesser powers instead had to be managed, by a whole series of compromises and a whole network of special arrangements. In this way it could be hoped that Chinese power would curb the Russians, while the Russians in turn were constrained by the Chinese. At the same time, the United States tried to moderate the conduct of both by offering inducements more attractive than what these opponents might achieve by adventures that the paralysis of American power had made possible. One recalls for example how vivid the threat of a new Korean war seemed, A.D. 1970, and how effective was the remedy the good doctor prescribed. On the other hand the attempt to synthesize real power out of the economic strength of Europe and Japan, and the invocations of "multipolarity," could not suffice to make players out of those who so richly enjoyed the role of spectators; and after the 1973 oil crisis it became very clear that the sheep would remain sheep.

While refusing to sanction a return to unilateral activism, a growing proportion of the intelligentsia took to criticizing the compromises that the new policy inevitably required. These critics would allow Dr. Kissinger neither to confront the Russians with power, nor to seduce the Russians with trade and friendly talk.

This is the background. Is President Carter's foreign policy going to be one or the other, or will it indeed be a

third—a truly new alternative? If only by a process of elimination, it is possible to define a new alternative, and it appears that Carter truly intends to pursue it. A third answer to the enemy's military power is not to confront it or to balance it, but actually to reduce it. This is by far the most difficult thing to achieve. By relentless declaration, by the example of an America that would itself avoid both the use of force and the threat to use it, by the active promotion of all institutional machines (and chiefly the UN with its myriad affiliates), it may be possible to raise the political costs of any use of force on the part of others. Once this is achieved, the value of military power as a diplomatic weapon will be correspondingly downgraded. As it is, the awesome destructive potential of thermonuclear warheads inhibits the use of force among the most powerful nations; and the use of outright force is much more difficult to legitimize nowadays than ever before. Hence their hope that a "world order" foreign policy might achieve further inhibitions and more complete restrictions.

The great difficulty of course is that nothing can alter the ultimate supremacy of force over other manifestations of national power. The general mood of the world, the inhibitions of mutual deterrence, and America's own "world order" policies may all transfer more and more of the world's business to the court of a softer diplomacy in which armed threats play no role. But the court of force will inevitably remain, and those who lose in the lower court will still be able to appeal, using coercion and even war to avert diplomatic defeat. This being the case, every move in the lower court of non-coercive diplomacy will be influenced by the active knowledge that the other court remains in permanent session, as it always will in the absence of general and complete disarmament.

A reversion to unilateralism or a balance-of-power policy—or more likely a combination of both—is only a matter of time. But when the reversion does take place, the world's refusal to live up to Carter's best intentions should not be attributed to the general amorality of politics, or to the particular temptations of military power. A closer scrutiny of the "world order" policy reveals an essential ambiguity: it *may be* a humanist exercise in self-restraint by a great military power, but it also could be viewed as a cynical attempt to change the rules of the game at a time when Soviet military power is becoming superior to our own. For it is clear that the successful downgrading of military power and coercive diplomacy must inevitably result in the increased importance of economic power and economic diplomacy. And the Soviet Union is a super-power only in the military dimension; it is no more than a middle power in the arena of the international economy.

E. N. Luttwak

E. N. Luttwak's most recent book is *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (Johns Hopkins).

Making poverty invisible is easier
than making it go away

Hiding the Other America

By Michael Harrington

The poor are being made invisible again.

The political and economic context of this tragic development can be described simply but accurately. When the official war against poverty was declared in 1964, unemployment was declining and prices were stable. Above all, there was a euphoric belief that a judicious fiscal and monetary fine-tuning by the New Economists around the White House had ended the business cycle. As Lyndon Johnson stated that faith in one of his last messages to Congress, "No longer do we view our economic life as a relentless tide of ups and downs." Why not skim off just a bit of this perpetually expanding wealth and use it to rescue the people of the other America? Happy assumptions about the economy were the premises of the federal idealism of the 1960s.

The unofficial war against the poor of the 1970s takes place under completely different conditions. There is chronic high unemployment—the worst since the Great Depression—and the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers promises that it will continue for the rest of the decade at levels thought intolerable in the 1960s. The nation has just emerged from a severe round of inflation and the first, modest signs of recovery are enough to make people fear that prices are going to soar again. Above all, there is no confidence that anyone really knows how to get the economy out of the relentless tide of ups and downs in which it founders.

Someone has to be the victim of this new pessimism. If there were vigorous plans for full employment—including measures financed by redistributionist tax policies—it would be possible to fight inflation, joblessness and the deterioration of the public sector simultaneously. But that would require a political consensus well to the left of where most politicians, including President Carter, locate the American people today. Instead, Carter proposes a moderate program of economic stimulus, while his chief economic adviser candidly tells the Congress that it will be 1979 before

the unemployment rate might drop below six percent. Meanwhile, the liberal Democratic governor of New York presents a budget that catches most of the Republican opposition off balance since it is somewhat to their right. In the political economy of 1977, the poor have been volunteered to sacrifice on behalf of the rest of us.

Trouble is, no one wants it to be said that he is insensitive to the plight of our most vulnerable citizens. Therefore it would be convenient if the poor could simply disappear. A new study published in January by the Congressional Budget Office, called "Poverty Status of Families Under Alternative Definitions of Income," takes a major step in turning the poor into non-persons. By an act of statistical legerdemain CBO eliminates the poverty of 3,628,000 families and doubles the rate at which the poor have been escaping from their fate since 1965. This remarkable news comes at a time when other government figures are reporting an increase of 2.5 million in the number below the poverty line. Obviously, the discovery is politically propitious.

The Supreme Court, Mr. Dooley said in that celebrated aphorism, follows the election returns. So do the statistics. I do not suggest that scholars simply juggle their numbers in cynical obedience to political manipulators (although that happens, too). It is more complex: the economic-political mood of a period focuses certain facts and blurs others. In the 1950s, most sincere and compassionate intellectuals could see clearly what was right with America; in the '60s, they could see clearly what was wrong. (Without getting into an epistemological thicket, I should simply say that I am not an agonistic relativist in such matters. The subjective view from the bottom of the society up is more objective than from the top down; the 1960s were more truthful than the 1950s.)

I first became aware that millions of poor people were about to vanish when I read the 1976 Report of the Council of Economic Advisers, a document issued by the Ayn Rand disciple, Alan Greenspan, in January 1976. One conclusion of this report was that the official definition of poverty neglected to count in the "in-kind"

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income received by the poor, *i.e.* the value of medicaid, housing subsidies, food stamps and the like. The council, while admitting that the data were not quite clear, said that these in-kind contributions total 130 percent of the gap between the cash incomes of the poor and the poverty line. The report hedged. It did not flatly say that all of the in-kind benefits actually could be attributed to the official poor—some of them went to people above the line—but it strongly implied that a major revision of our estimate of the number of the impoverished was in order.

Writing in the summer 1976 issue of the neo-conservative journal *The Public Interest*, Edgar K. Browning, an economist from the University of Virginia, was not as tentative as the council had been. "When in-kind transfers... are counted as income," Browning said, "the average poor family in 1973 had an income that was approximately 30 per cent *above* the poverty line. In terms of the average income of officially poor families, there is practically no poverty—statistically speaking—in the United States today, and, indeed, there has not been for several years. It only remains for our accounting procedures to be modified to record this achievement."

By last fall, this good news was being communicated to the people by the press. On the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times* Harry Schwartz told of the "more realistic definition" of poverty developed by Browning and others. He chided the government for issuing statistics that were, for most people, "misleading." Then in January of this year the Congressional Budget Office released its study, asserting much the same thing. Since the government had said in late September that the number of the poor had gone up by 11 percent during 1975, the news of our hidden achievement was especially surprising.

In fact, the statistical method used in these revisions could have been designed by Dr. Pangloss. The procedure was to take all of the factors—some real, some imagined—that might conceivably have led to an overcounting of the poor and to give them the greatest weight possible. Simultaneously, one carefully ignored all of the data that suggest that there has been an undercount of the poor. Not surprisingly, this tendentious exercise resulted in the inevitable conclusion that the number of poor people has been exaggerated. Harry Schwartz and others thought that they were champions of social scientific rigor. In fact, they were unwitting shills for some careless and prejudiced analyses. And they were helping to make some very real poor people invisible.

Some of the considerations that were excluded systematically from the new definitions are the subject of an extensive literature. It is shocking that the Congressional Budget Office, which heretofore has observed rather high standards, should have permitted a study as politically biased as this one. The kindest

thing one can say is that perhaps it is innocently incompetent.

The CBO analysis takes the official poverty definition as its point of departure, and then criticizes it for overcounting. That definition, developed by Mollie Orshansky of the Social Security Administration in 1964, defines a number of annual-income poverty lines depending on family size, sex of the family head, farm or non-farm residence, and number of children. The figure usually cited in the press as "the" poverty line is the figure for a four-person urban family. It is arrived at by taking the cost of an "economy" plan food budget designed by the US Department of Agriculture for "emergency or temporary use when funds are low" and multiplying that figure by three. Since three-to-one is the assumed ratio between food and total budget cost. Since 1969, the figure has been increased by reference to the consumer price index rather than the cost of food in the economy plan.

The CBO carefully notes how this method does not take into account the value of in-kind goods and services. It just as carefully ignores the voluminous literature which criticizes the definition for being much too low, that is for undercounting the poor. One of the most prominent critics has been Mollie Orshansky herself. The three-to-one ratio between food cost and total budget is based on a 1955 study which there is reason to believe is out of date; the basic food component itself never has been changed. The consumer price index does not adequately reflect the impact of inflation on the poor: using a base year of 1967 as 100, the CPI stood at 158.3 as a national average in 1975—but it was 162.3 for the poor and 157.2 for the wealthy.

Last April the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare did a much more careful job of surveying the problems of defining poverty. (This report, of course, was available to the CBO researchers.) It concluded that if one raised the multiplier from three-to-one to five-to-one, and used a "low cost" rather than an "economy" food plan—two changes that are "within the range of reasonable judgment"—then the official poverty lines would be twice as high and one-third of the American people would be defined as poor. Orshansky considered several alternative definitions that would correct for undercounting; the result at one extreme (which is, however, quite plausible) was that the 1974 poverty line for a four-person family went from \$5008 to \$8118. This would increase the number of the poor in 1974 from 24.3 million to 55.4 million.

The CBO did not have to agree with Orshansky's highest estimate. But when a supposedly scientific analysis of a statistical definition does not even mention the reams of serious critiques of that definition from another point of view, something is profoundly amiss. Harry Schwartz might be forgiven for not knowing about the HEW study; the CBO cannot be, and should not be. One becomes suspicious when there is such a

glaring omission. It calls to mind Gunnar Myrdal's remark that ignorance is never random. In this case, it serves the neo-conservative mood of many ex-liberals.

The CBO lingers over underreporting of the income of the poor, emphasizing, for instance, that only 74.5 percent of public assistance shows up in income statistics included in the government's current population survey. But the same chart from which the CBO gets this information shows that only 44.2 percent of dividend, interest, rental and like income of the middle and upper class show up in the survey. The CBO does not emphasize this matter—one that becomes quite important when relative shares are at issue, since the missing poverty income is worth 2.8 billion dollars while the middle and upper class shortfall comes to 46.3 billion dollars.

There is no mention in the CBO report of an even more dramatic case of missing data: the census population undercount. It is generally thought that the government misses as many as 30 percent of the population in each census. Most of the missing are poor: people without regular addresses, phones or jobs, and illegal aliens who do not want to become any kind of statistic. The Carter administration estimated this month that there are four million people "whose names are not listed in federal files because most of them pay no taxes and receive no government benefits." They are sometimes called the "poorest of the poor." They are not mentioned by CBO.

In attributing the value of the in-kind goods and services as income to the poor, the CBO values these items at their dollar cost to the federal government. Thus part of the increased "income" of the other America is that cost of unnecessary, and even harmful, medical care at inflated prices in medicare mills; and the money which various real estate speculators rip off from housing subsidy programs. The CBO makes a large assumption here: that in-kind income received from the government is the functional equivalent of cash income. In the process, a remarkable negative fact about American society actually sneaks into a relentlessly positive analysis. The "natural" workings of the economy—incomes before any transfer payments are added in—leave about 25 percent of the people poor. Moreover, this shocking fact has changed only "slightly" (the CBO's word) in the past decade (28 percent of families were below the poverty level before transfers in 1965, 24 percent in 1975). So one out of four citizens is dependent upon the government, not the private economy, for a crucial portion of its standard of living.

Is it fair to equate the in-kind income poor people receive with the pay checks of the other three quarters of the population? One obvious difference leaps to mind: cash income can be spent however a person wants; in-kind income cannot. Indeed, on the CBO assumptions people can enormously increase their

income—and even enter the middle class—by suffering a catastrophic illness at government expense. (This problem gets one sentence in the study.) A large part of medical in-kind benefits goes for the care of terminal illnesses. It is a gain that some of the poor can now have some decency in their final moments on earth, but I do not think that this fact should be counted as a major contribution to the elimination of poverty in America.

But let me confront the difficult case where important benefits are indeed conferred, and not just upon those about to die. Food stamps, which unquestionably represent a significant gain for the nation, are an obvious example. Can they be simply valued in terms of their money cost (or their market value)? I think not. Poverty is not simply a statistical phenomenon describing certain characteristics of an aggregate of individuals; it is social reality as well. That is, the poor do not merely lack income. They also go to jail for their wrongdoing, which the middle class, in most cases, does not; they get sick more often; they suffer from greater emotional and mental stress; and so on. Harry Caudill and, more recently, Kai Erikson have hauntingly evoked the demoralization which welfare dependency can bring. Would the CBO be happy if three-quarters of the people received statistically adequate incomes but were cut off from any meaningful work functions in the society?

If the CBO study had dealt with this problem, and the others I have cited, that would have been an earnest of good faith even if it were badly done. Most of these difficulties are not even alluded to; those that are get the most superficial mention; and nothing is allowed to interfere with the basic, and it seems to me preordained, conclusion. To be sure, there are references to forthcoming technical documents and one hopes that they will raise, and perhaps confront, some of these issues. But Alice Rivlin, chief economist of the CBO, claims that this study provides the basis for a congressional evaluation of welfare reform. Any congressman who reads it is likely to be seriously misled.

Finally, one other instrument of social analysis which this study ignores should at least be noted: the human eye. The CBO analysts work in Washington. While traveling through that city did they ever lift their eyes from the examination of mathematical equations and look out the window? Perhaps they take only the sanitized routes. Did Harry Schwartz of *The New York Times* invest a dollar in a round-trip subway ride to the South Bronx? If he had, he would not have written his column as he did. Has anyone looked at Detroit recently? St. Louis? The Appalachian hollows or the barrios of the Southwest?

I know all of the objections to personal and random observation as a means of social scientific analysis. I share some of them. But before we become a nation of computer cretins, we might just take a walk and see if poverty still exists, massively and cruelly. It does.

Liberals argue for reform on the basis of self-interest And that's why almost no one's for it **Bring Back Hell Fire**

by Alan Tonelson

Democrats control the White House, both houses of Congress, the overwhelming majority of governorships and most state legislatures. But liberals are depressed and pessimistic, and they should be. The sad truth is that despite these triumphs for the Democratic party, there is no constituency for reform in this country. The current plight of the Republicans has been well publicized; yet the constituency following the "liberal" banner is not much larger. Of those questioned in recent Gallup polls, between 42 and 49 percent identified themselves as "right of center," only 31 percent as "left of center," a steady 10 percent saw themselves as "middle of the road."

If not for the intellectuals and those in the national press whose prominence and communications skills create such an illusion of power that conservatives still believe they're running the show, liberals would rank somewhere between vegetarians and the mentally ill on a scale of political clout. This is sad because for the past 40 years, whatever grace and wit our politics has displayed has come from liberals. They shaped the Democratic party and made it a central part of modern American political life that the conservative GOP never has been.

Liberals have brought this dilemma upon themselves, by failing to state their position in moral terms. The political debate today is conducted almost exclusively in the form of appeals to self-interest. (A possible and ironic exception is the right-to-life movement.) In affluent modern America, where almost everybody has bought into the system, it is hard to make reform sound appealing on this basis.

It was not always thus. Reform in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was intensely moralistic. Its impetus came from a fervent desire to advance Christian values and ideals, and its overwhelming impulse was to do good according to these precepts. This obsession with virtue, righteousness and matters of the spirit was of a sort we find peculiar and discomfiting today.

This style suited a largely homogeneous nation of small farmers, small businesses and small towns. But the United States grew industrial and urban, waves of immigration reshaped its demographic profile. By the

mid-'20s Progressivism, the last and greatest moralistic reform movement, lay prostrate and the torch of reform passed to the Democratic machines of the Eastern cities. As the New Deal unfolded, a new reform movement emerged, a secular force that shed the heavy moral coat of its predecessors. Reformers portrayed themselves as tough-minded, hard-boiled, somewhat cynical pragmatists. This is not to say that the New Dealers lacked a sense of right and wrong, or that a deep-seated desire for justice and decency never motivated their actions, but these were simply not words which sprang to their lips. They justified their deeds in utilitarian terms. New Dealers offered Americans just that—a deal. "If you want the federal government on your side, if you want prosperity to return, keep us in office." As long as Depression-time memories remained warm, confidence in recovery stayed shaky and the idea of long-lasting, permanent prosperity remained beyond the public imagination. As long as Americans felt a genuine need for their programs, Democratic liberals did just fine. But when long-term prosperity returned, their strategy backfired. The liberals' mass support depended on their skill in manipulating the tricky gusts of self-interest, and these winds were blown out of control by nearly universal comfort and affluence. Fewer Americans needed what they had to offer and a decades-long marriage of convenience began to unravel.

Compounding these problems was the liberals' failure to create an ideological counterpart to the folklore of capitalism. Indeed, their diehard pragmatism prevented this. When calls for continued reform fell on deaf ears, liberals had nothing in the way of a pitch to fall back on. Their ranks lacked a sizeable, ideologically loyal hardcore that supported them out of unwavering conviction. Yet liberals not only failed to adapt to these changes, they failed even to sense them. They put themselves in a hopeless political position, urging continued reform when only a minority of Americans needed it, and insisting that the affluent majority had a stake in this effort as well. This last claim has been especially damaging; it amounts to a shrill cry of "wolf!" and has destroyed much liberal credibility. Their emphasis on the need to wipe out our last pockets of poverty, improve the lot of minority groups and take on a whole host of other projects is simply belied by the realities of power and the carpet-like distribution of

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wealth in America today.

Even today, after years of economic slump, America's haves far outnumber its have-nots. The Census Bureau reported in late September that 25.88 million Americans live below the poverty line. This is a terrible situation, but the true significance of this figure is that nearly 200 million Americans live above it. Likewise with unemployment. No matter how much of a drag our jobless place on the economy, their numbers aren't great enough to make a significant political impact, as an issue or as a voting bloc.

Though these points seem too obvious to belabor, their importance has eluded modern liberals. Just two days after the census findings came out Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. displayed the liberal myopia about race relations. Astonished that the subject of civil rights was ignored in the first presidential debate, Schlesinger asked in his *Wall Street Journal* column, "Do the panel and candidates think that no one cares anymore? Are white Americans satisfied with a society that makes pious gestures toward equal opportunity while shoving non-whites into semi-subordination?" His answers showed how murky the view from the once vital center can be. "If white Americans think the problem of racial justice has been resolved, they are deluded," Schlesinger argued. Fair enough. But he went on to say, "If they suppose that they can sweep that problem back under the rug where it festered for so many shameful years, they are worse deluded." It's hard to see why. First, all indications are that white Americans for the most part are *supremely* satisfied with the semi-subordinate status of minority groups. And second, precisely what will prevent them from sweeping civil rights out of sight if they so desire? Where is the political, economic, social or military leverage needed to back up Schlesinger's gently posed but unmistakable threat? What are the dire consequences of inaction? This brings us to the heart of the liberal dilemma, to the brutal reality of mass prosperity that sticks in the liberals' craw, bores away at their power and erodes their self-respect.

If the emergence of a society so materially wealthy and successful it can afford to leave its remaining problems unsolved has reduced our politics to a dismal paraphrase of Stalin's "How many divisions has the Pope?" liberals are as much to blame as anybody. On those rare occasions when political discussion in this country rises to a philosophical plane, conservatives deplore liberals for ignoring the spiritual side of human nature, for narrowly viewing man as an economic creature. Barry Goldwater argues this very insistently, and liberals generally react with scorn. Noting the conservatives' own tendency to neglect vital material needs, I.F. Stone once wrote caustically that the Goldwaterites believed "man is a spiritual animal and therefore, presumably, can live on wind." But the fact remains that the liberal view has been equally one-sided, and now liberals find themselves paying the price for divorcing morality from reform. Had they paid

more attention to spirituality, had they been more inclined to enlist the moral impulses of human nature to aid their reform efforts, they might not be in such disrepute today.

This year, Jimmy Carter has stepped into the moral vacuum left by Democratic liberals and in the process showed them the way out of the woods. As Simon Lazarus and Harry Huge wrote in this magazine last June, Carter has "significantly expanded the potential constituency for progressive policies." And he's done this by fusing once again the notions of moralism and reform which had drifted so far apart in the last 50 years. Many liberals still aren't comfortable with "their" party's President. Some harbor genuine, frequently understandable doubts about Carter's credibility. But many others are more profoundly troubled, more thoroughly alienated, no more able to relate to the Carter campaign than a Sioux warrior to a locomotive—and just as contemptuous. Their qualms can be boiled down to reservations over Carter's style. They complain that he has contented himself with mouthing pious, banal homilies about love and trust, has spent too much time patting the American people on the back, and is reluctant to confront them with hard choices or unpleasant truths—that he has in fact smiled his way into the White House. But Carter appears to be aware that if a liberal politician—especially a President—fails to pave the way for reform, fails to rouse those slumbering moral energies the movement must depend on today—if he fails, in short, to lead—his cause is lost. Now, for the first time in years, Americans have been told that it is important not to be big, or strong, or feared, but to be good. Is the liberal imagination so boxed in that it fails to grasp what a boon this could be to reform?

To ridicule or scorn Carter's attempts to create a climate conducive to reform is to misread America's political mood. Our prosperity has produced an inertia which is probably fatal to pragmatic reform. Liberalism will have difficulty surviving, much less flourishing, if it fails to encourage a moral revival of sorts and foster at the grass roots a greater sense of social obligation.

Perhaps in the end, the reform movement's main problem is best expressed in simple, personal terms—liberals don't seem to like people anymore, they don't seem to have any faith in the public. Believing that the great masses of people never will be as high-minded as they themselves are, liberals continue to argue their cause in appeals to self-interest, which are ludicrous and seen as such by affluent and educated public. This elitism, and the chilly, narrowly pragmatic approach reform has taken in modern times, have left liberalism mired in the bog of its own pessimism. Given their isolation from the common man and their frequently humorless demeanor, Democratic liberals have become the stylistic Republicans of our time. The polls suggest their fate may be the same.

Stanley Kauffmann on comedy

Ticklish Matters

Film Department

If three new comedies could have been cooked together, they might have made one good picture.

The Wonderful Crook (New Yorker) was written by the French-Swiss Claude Goretta and it's a pretty good script. A young married man inherits a debt-ridden small furniture factory. In order to pay the wages of the loyal workers and install needed machines, he secretly becomes a bandit. He takes out truckloads of furniture as if delivering them, burns them, then robs supermarkets, etc. While robbing a post office, he meets a young woman and falls in love. His private sex and crime lives finally collide with his public lives.

It might have been brisk and sharp, but Writer Goretta was saddled with Director Goretta who handled the thing as if it were a study in existential *Angst*. He dwells on the hero's father's paralytic stroke before death; includes irrelevant atmospheric scenes like one with an alcoholic in an inn; and uses a tempo that would seem laggard to a snail. Gerard Depardieu (it's this month's Depardieu film) gives his customary physicality-as-talent performance quite well, but both the wife and the girl friend are unappealing. With better women and with a director who wasn't so worried about proving that he's serious, *too*, this might have been like one of those cute French comedies of the 1930s.

Conversely *Nasty Habits* (Brut) is brightly directed but its script fizzles. Robert J. Enders wrote it from Muriel Spark's novel *The Abbess of Crewe* (which I haven't read), transposing it to Philadelphia. This story of politicking in a convent is made analogous to Nixon's maneuvers and tapings. The language and conduct are vulgar in two senses, broad enough to make J. F. Powers's stories about priests sound like parochial-school fare.

But the script goes nowhere with its idea. Nixonland and Watergate are mimicked in nuns' dress, and that's about it. Besides the Nixon figure (Glenda Jackson), there are John Dean (Sandy Dennis, very funny), a Kissinger character (Melina Mercouri as a globe-trotting sister), Haldeman and Ehrlichman, phrases like "perfectly clear," and so on. To what end? The piece is much more travesty than satire, but it makes no points whatsoever about its referent (Nixon) or its medium (the religious life). It's just a gag, started and not finished.

Still, it's cleverly directed and edited. The first job was done by Michael Lindsay-Hogg who, in England, has directed TV comedies by Simon Gray (see below). The editor was Peter Tanner who knew exactly when to go and when to stay.

Fun with Dick and Jane (Columbia) has soggy script and soggy direction. Like *The Wonderful Crook* it's about "nice" people who become thieves. Dick and Jane are upper-middle LA, with a small child and a small pool. Dick loses his plush job; after some author-contrived desperation, he and his fun-loving wife try stealing. It all turns out OK because—surprise—the straight world is even crooked, and their crookedness leads to success in it.

The trouble with the script is that Dick and Jane, as written, are loathsome—the ultimate in disgusting conspicuous consumers—and yet we're supposed to sympathize with their buttery problems. The director, Ted Kotcheff, bruises us with his heavy hands as he tries to be light-fingered. The editor, Danford B. Greene, has the unfortunate gift of staying on each face just a second too long, particularly after smart cracks.

George Segal tries hard as Dick, and tries us. But there is Jane Fonda as Jane, lithe, mischievous and sexy. It's great to see her again. If only she could have been in *The Wonderful Crook* and if only it could have been made by the people who made *Nasty Habits*.

Theater Department

If Noël Coward had been born in 1936, like Simon Gray, he might have written Gray comedy. The locus has changed from frivolous London high society to the bookish London middle class, the dramaturgy has shifted from careful plot to seeming meander in order to reflect the New Aimlessness, the dialogue now includes the frank as well as the brittle, but the basic principle is

much the same. A writer who can spin light dialogue, like a silkworm, simply spins along until he has enough for an evening, then stops. Despite the latter-day layer of intellectual-social reference and some last-minute emotional tug, the aim is to make two hours pass pleasantly if possible.

Somewhere in the second of the two acts of *Otherwise Engaged* I felt that Gray remembered he needed a conclusion, so he began to slip in some cautions about the hero's emotional aloofness. Until then Gray had simply got laughs out of the sheerly theatrical device (not psychological study) of a hero who does and says little while a string of characters in various frenzies come and pour out their troubles or passions to him. *Butley*, Gray's previous play, was somewhat better because at least Butley was a bastard from word one, his characterization wasn't an obvious afterthought.

The hero is named Simon Hench. (It's as if Edward Albee named a hero Edward Calvert.) Trying to spend a day alone listening to records, he is interrupted by, in turn and usually more than once, a troublesome tenant from his top floor, his older brother, a literary friend, friend's present girl, another girl's presumable father, and his own wife. The play is like a thread reeling along that, as it comes near its end, is knotted to another thread so that the reeling can go on. No growth, just replacements—a series of "two" scenes between Simon and one person after another. We get the feeling that he's like a quiet ping-pong champ taking on all challengers. (There are as many as three people on stage only when someone happens to

Films Worth Seeing

Harlan County U.S.A. Barbara Kopple's strong documentary of a coal miners' strike 1973—moving and authentically American.

The Marquise of O... Eric Rohmer's fine film (his first in German) from Kleist's great story.

Network. Suspend your disbelief and enjoy Paddy Chayefsky's razzle-dazzle about TV power-plays. Well acted and directed.

The Seven-per-cent-Solution. Sherlock Holmes, Sigmund Freud, bright dialogue and polished acting. Enough?

SK

enter before the present visitor leaves.)

Tom Courtenay, known from such English films as *Billy Liar*, makes his US stage debut as Simon—and doesn't kid about it, he's on stage the whole evening. Courtenay has calmness and nice timing. Of the others, all American or Canadian, the best is Lynn Milgrim as a sexy intellectual bitch with just the right sexy intellectual insolence.

Harold Pinter's direction is shocking. His ear is excellent, but his eye is weak, as he showed earlier this season in his direction of *The Innocents*. He's like a fine radio director with no sense of space or movement. For instance the two brothers stand face to face for minutes in Simon's living room, talking. I wanted to shout at them to sit down.

But there are some laughs. And at least Gray operates with ease, he doesn't paw at you, à la Tom Stoppard, like an unbearable bright child.

Important News. When Ingmar

Bergman's *Scenes from a Marriage* was shown in theaters here, I deplored the fact that we were seeing a crammed version of a series made for Swedish TV in six 50-minute episodes, and I thought that, even though Bergman himself had made the condensation, we could not possibly be seeing the work in the rhythms and with the intervals that must have figured in such an artist's original conceptions (*TNR*, Oct. 12, '74). I said that the series "should have been shown on public television—specially subtitled for television as some foreign films have been." Well, it's happening. On March 9 PBS will start presenting the series. (Different times in different localities; check local PBS listings.) What's more, WNET/13 New York, and many other stations, too, will present each episode twice: once dubbed into English and once (thank heaven) in Swedish with specially prepared subtitles.

Hurrah!

The Inaugural Square Dance

Grand Right and Left

Whether we like it or not, the integrity of the family remains the great problem in American life, and produces the major paradoxes by which we live. If we had forgotten this, in seeking relief from the generation gap and the other paraphernalia of our most recent agonies, Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter dramatized the problem and the prospect of family integrity in their promenade down Pennsylvania Avenue. Jimmy had fully prepared us, or so it seems in retrospect, with his inaugural speech emphasizing the family Bible on which he had taken his oath of office and by speaking of bringing back the words honesty and integrity to government. But not until he and Rosalynn went strolling down the center line between the Capitol and the White House could we visualize just what he was getting at. The moving tableau was breathtaking: Amy holding hands with them, swinging along, kicking the pebbles, skipping, trying to stay within the center stripe. And soon joining them in the same TV picture, Jack and Judy, with their Jason balanced on his shoulders, Chip with very pregnant Caron, and numerous other yeoman Carters.

Here, for once, American iconography

came through for us, even for the most cynical (in the group I was in, anyhow). This family led by our new Southern peanut-farmer politician President and his smart-walking wife embodied just what all of us hope to witness in other domains in the next few years: a nation of families on the move. In this, the Carters did not walk away from contradictions that we Americans carry around with us, always bidding fair to tear us apart. Rather they brought old and young, country and city, males and females together in a processional that gave us, as nothing else could, a moving image for this time of transition. The rest of the parade was icing on the cake, underlining the message that this is a big family, an extended family in the old mold, with Miss Lillian still sitting in the place of dignity, and Billy there to provide the comic relief and to remind us that every family has its character. The Nixon years, the years of our Godfather who loves us and kills us, are thus succeeded by a benevolent, proud and humble Big Daddy, our pastor-planter in our parlor or sitting on the veranda.

The rest of the celebration? Well, Jimmy and Rosalynn at balls, allowing the old Washington hands to snipe about



**The man who
brilliantly
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world of the
recent past...**

"He illuminates a large area of modern cultural history" wrote Hilton Kramer of *Children of the Sun*—the most recent of Martin Green's acclaimed critical works.

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already being sick of her dress and his smile (to say nothing about Billy's drinking beer out of a can); all of that felt out of keeping, our worried capital at its worst. Besides, no matter how many luminaries (even half-lit ones) you see, the experience of witnessing so many people squeezed together in their glitzy gowns and lacquered shoes was not just unmoving, it was uncomfortable.

But the Georgia celebration and the big square dance—that was something else. A scary something else, to be sure, but it too produced some moving moments. In fact, getting 10,000 people to dance in squares at the same time is as moving as you can get. On the raised podium 50 feet above the floor, the sight of all of that circling, do-si-doing and alla-manning left provided a dizzying scene indeed, an effect enhanced greatly by the swirling of crinolines and sequins—to say nothing of the yelps which resounded every time one of the callers pulled off something cute. To us standing up there looking down on the laughing, dancing throng, the thrill arose from the sheer cultural instinctiveness of the squaring off. Though many of the squares had made the trip together especially for the event, there were many others (including the very gracious Southern lady Nancy Hanks, who welcomed the dancers as a member of the Inaugural Committee as well as head of the National Endowment for the Arts) who were simply swept into the dancing, and the squares seemed to arise out of the order of the night.

The appropriateness of the proceedings is perhaps all-too-obvious, but let's say it anyhow. Square dancing is probably our boldest remaining statement of the old country values: four

couples holding hands, all facing each other, constantly circling the square with figures as elaborate as your favorite quilt or coverlet, the couples ending each figure just where they began, responding immediately to the caller, knowing by long practice the special language that puts them into motion and keeps them there until they're "home."

Lately the square has not been a figure of great repute. The word, which used to mean straight-in-the-eye honesty, especially reputability, caved in with the onslaught of the hip way of looking and judging in the rocking '60s. In such an environment, coming on "freaky" and "groovy," and later "far out" carried more interest than the sedateness of the straight and the attractions of the square. These terms, imported from the lingo of musicians, mostly black hipsters, reflected an attitude toward putting sounds (and movement) together meaningfully, and one of the best ways of doing this was to reject the constraints of the very square song (usually in 4/4, with four-line stanzas, each line having four stresses) and box-step dances in favor of the more virtuoso forms which broke free in almost every direction and gave promise of letting everyone get into doing his or her own "thing." The rejection of the square was accompanied by lots of other cultural topsy-turvy, like the glorification of the funky, the pimp, the baaad, the twist, the jerk.

As always, our alternatives were maintained far out on the country road. We never lost our square dancers, cowboys and mountain men; we only lost sight of them, putting them away in the cracker-box. Even at a time when Afro- and native-Americans were being glorified, the "hill-billy" underwent the indignities of stereotyping as lazy and uneducated rubes (as in "Hee-Haw") or worse, as perverted toothless murderers (*Deliverance*). Perhaps America's strengths lie in the cultural resiliency inherited from accommodation to a multiplicity of heritages, and from the ability to keep alternatives of expression alive if not always in the spotlight. The Festival of American Folklife put on by the Smithsonian on the Mall in Washington has for years been carefully if quietly promoting this message of greatness through diversity.

To much of the US, "country" means Southern—and for many good reasons. If the South hasn't completely given up on old ways of thinking and acting (including vestiges of the etiquette of

race relations), it has also retained the attitude that home is still home, and that the good life means living in families that extend around you in many directions and generations.

If the South had to rise through calumny, it did so knowing that it didn't have to rise again at all. Southerners could see evidence all around them that even while the reviling was going on, their styles were being admired and emulated. Not only has the Southern way of fry-cooking and barbecuing been adopted as the American way, but even Southern communication styles, "cottonmouthing," has swept the country in the form of CB radio talk, and in the growing popularity of country-rock and basic soul styles of singing.

So the square-dance was more than a cornball side-show to the inauguration—it sounded a note of where this administration is going, while carefully dramatizing where it is coming from. Getting so many bodies and voices going together is no small accomplishment. The display at the National Visitors Center was motley, of course, satisfying the requirements of a truly national festive celebration. In the front room there was a constant singing show going on, with country performers of many colors and persuasions. But the main action was the dancing in that huge old railroad terminal. Witnessing blacks tripping in squares is not unlike the first time you see Charlie Pride sing, all the more dramatic because the dancers are primarily rural and working class Southerners, whooping and whirling. But the show-dance of the night, clogging, makes this All-American-family point as well as any expressive feature of our culture. For this dance is a vigorous coming together of the Scots-Irish jig tradition (with its intricate "foot-stepping") and the basic black loose-limbed tap dance. This has been the continuing story of American expressive forms, this coming together of the Afro- and Euro-American ways of dancing, running, playing. Those who follow sports, especially football or basketball, have known this for some time. But I can't remember when the lesson of creative pluralism was so well taught, so effectively dramatized.

Roger D. Abrahams

Roger D. Abrahams has written *Deep the Water, Shallow the Shore*, a book about West Indian sea shanties (Univ. of Texas Press).

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Books Considered

Letters of E. B. White edited by Dorothy Lobrano Guth

(Harper & Row; \$15)

In the autumn of 1941, when I was 26, Selective Service notified me that I was physically unfit for military duty, and in the spring of 1944 I was asked to join the staff of *The New Yorker*. It did not occur to me, then or later, that there was any direct connection between the two events—except, of course, for the fact that being 4-F made me available for civilian employment. But now, almost 33 years later, I learn from E. B. White that, because of the war, the magazine was in so acute a manpower, or person-power, crisis that Harold Ross, the founder and editor, was considering turning it into a biweekly for the duration. "*The New Yorker*," White wrote his brother Stanley in March

1944, "is a worse madhouse than ever now, on account of the departure of everybody for the wars, leaving only the senile, the psychoneurotic, the maimed, the halt, and the goofy to get out the magazine. There is hardly a hormone left in the place." Reading that, I had, for the moment, the feeling that common decency should have led me to turn in my typewriter the day the Japanese surrendered and the hormones started coming back. But only for a moment. Edmund Wilson, after all, was another 1944 recruit, and White was at the top of his form in those days, as were Ross, William Shawn, James Thurber, Janet Flanner, A. J. Liebling, Joel Sayre, S. J. Perelman, Alva Johnston, Joseph

Mitchell and John McNulty. *The New Yorker* was in one of its finest periods.

And it was White, more than any other writer, who set the tone. In the "Notes and Comment" section, he would lead off the magazine each week with brief, crisp, urbane observations on the state of the world, the country, the city, and the human condition in general. He could be flip and earnest in the same breath. He knew how to champion causes in a voice that was never hectoring. He was a moralist who never seemed to be moralizing. All this, of course, was a function of his style, and in his case, as this book shows, the style and the man are inseparable. This rather surprised me, though it should not have done so. But I had always assumed that White achieved his effects by prodigies of literary fine-tuning, by much rewriting and pruning and burnishing. This seems not to be the case, for the language of the letters is as fresh and graceful and sinewy, the metaphors as felicitous and unexpected as anything in the editorials, the essays, the stories and the poems. Some writers, to be sure, compose their letters with an eye on publishers and posterity; many of White's best, though, were written at a time when he could not have assumed that readers would have any interest in his private life or correspondence. Addressed mostly to family, friends and colleagues, they are full of trivia about goings on in the office in New York, the barnyard in Maine, and in the busy, frequently depressed, occasionally exhilarated head of the author. And the prose, written either in states of relaxation or for purposes of relaxation, is all but indistinguishable from that of his most admired work. The style seems not so much a skilled craft as an endowment, not something learned and practiced but something almost reflexive, like breathing.

The letters reveal a writer rather different from the one his readers think they know. This gentle, civilized man of letters turns out to be—well, not really a man of letters at all. He says that if there was one thing he and Ross had in common, it was that "neither of us read anything," and this, apparently, is not far from the truth. There are few literary allusions except to his *New Yorker* colleagues and hardly any that could be looked upon favorably by the academy. He respects Santayana as a stylist and Thoreau as a thinker. There are six references to Hemingway, all in dispraise; he thinks Willa Cather the better novelist. "I'm a non-reader of



drawing by David Schorr

contemporary poetry in a big way," he writes. He once picked up Joyce's *Ulysses* but put it down because it made him "horribly nervous." To him, Dorothy Parker ranks ahead of Melville because he can remember some of her lines but can recall nothing from *Moby Dick*. Dorothy Lamour, he says, is his favorite actress, her *Jungle Princess* his favorite movie. Those old enough to recall White's passionate commitment to world government and disarmament—enthusiasms which Ross thought balmy but nevertheless allowed White to air in the magazine—can here trace his disillusionment over the years. It seems to have set in when, sometime in the late 1940s, he decided that the Bolsheviks were a bad lot and didn't believe in free institutions. He then moved to a rather conventional Cold War position, writing Mark Van Doren in 1963 that "I don't think coexistence with a nation whose territorial ambitions are, by its own admission, unlimited is or can be peaceful. And I am flatly against disarmament, which I believe to be an illusion—a harmful and costly one." Later he writes: "It is always sobering to encounter the intellectual idealists at work, for they seem to live in a realm of their own, making their plans for the world in much the same way that any common tyrant does."

Coming from White, this is passing strange and uncharacteristically inexplicit. Which intellectual idealists? Plato? Thomas More? Montesquieu? Thomas Jefferson? Thoreau? And what about White? He would probably say that he is not an intellectual but a farmer who now and then writes. But this is almost like saying that Winston Churchill was a bricklayer who now and then dabbled in politics. And anyone who has written, as White once did, that the practicability of world government could be demonstrated by the success of New York City—world government "in microcosm"—is a certifiable idealist, easily distinguishable from tyrants, common or uncommon. But what, in the letters, strikes one most about White is not his bruised idealism or the intellectuality he denies but his insistent integrity and independence as a writer. It comes through in two exchanges separated by 40 years. In 1936, Alexander Woollcott, a *New Yorker* contributor who did the magazine little credit, lent his name and his ill-gotten prestige to an advertising campaign by a well-known whiskey distiller. White and others in the office were outraged. White took out after Woollcott in letters

that were at once savage and funny. "I feel patronized and you [are] suddenly discredited," he wrote Woollcott. How, he asked, can a reader take seriously the opinions of a writer who takes money for giving a good opinion of a particular make of booze or any other commercial product? "I still cling (by my teeth these days) to the notion that writing is a trust"—i.e., a public trust, like high office—and no writer should surrender his "amateur standing." Woollcott did not back down, but he soon lapsed into a well-earned obscurity. And only last year White took on a more formidable, though probably less venal, adversary—the Xerox Corporation, which made a deal with *Esquire* to pay, at far more than the magazine's going rates, for an article whose subject and author were judged worthy by the editor. No endorsements were asked nor any control over the product. The moral issue here was not as clear as in the Woollcott affair, but

White found the arrangement threatening. Public-spirited corporation executives, he argued, might enable many newspapers and magazines to undertake worthy journalistic enterprises that the publications could not finance by themselves, but the possibilities for abuse were endless, and he would sooner forego the "funded spectacular." "I want to read what the editor and publisher have managed to dig up on their own—and paid for out of the till." The Xerox people thought the point well taken and acknowledged that they should stick to making duplicating machines and leave editing and writing to editors and writers. White kept the public trust and served the public interest.

Richard H. Rovere

Richard H. Rovere's memoirs, *Arrivals and Departures*, were recently published by Macmillan.

The Yeshiva by Chaim Grade translated by Curt Leviant

(Bobbs Merrill; \$12.50)

Each year the number of Yiddish writers shrinks a little, and the few that remain keep getting a little more lonely. They are determined to keep alive their language and their culture—but how can they not know that they are probably the last generation of Yiddish poets and novelists? One of the most important of those who remain is Chaim Grade, a writer now living in New York but born in Vilna, the "Jerusalem" of East European Jewry in the earlier decades of the century.

Grade entered Yiddish literary life as a poet and novelist active in a group of insurgent semi-modernists known as "Young Vilna," but since the Holocaust he has veered back, like other Yiddish writers, toward more traditionalist concerns. A complicated and turbulent figure, he is learned in both religious matters and secular European literature and thought. Indeed, the clash between these two world-outlooks forms a dominant theme in his work, which is notable for a fierce, sometimes overwrought sense of historical pressure. Though several of his prose works have been put into English, he has not always been fortunate in his translators, and those who know him only through English versions may not

quite see why he is so greatly admired among Yiddish readers.

I doubt that his newly translated novel, *The Yeshiva*, will remedy this situation, for the book is deeply entwined with old-world religious and intellectual struggles—and is written with an intensity likely to seem excessive to American readers. Grade's best known work in English is probably "My Quarrel with Hersh Rasseynier," a story that first appeared in the Howe-Greenberg *A Treasury of Yiddish Stories*. This fierce debate between an orthodox believer and a modern skeptic—they trade blows as together they mourn the ruins of their East European Jewish world—shows Grade at his best: the dramatic rendering of intellectual struggle, the clash between two modes of thought which brought East European Jewry to a high pitch of excitement even while threatening to tear it apart.

As a youth Grade was exposed to the Musar movement, an ethico-religious tendency in Jewish life designed to train its followers in strict conduct, if need be through the disciplines of self-denial. (And one sometimes suspects, with a grating satisfaction in the pain of those disciplines.) Encountering Musar in *The Yeshiva*, American readers may

remember the styles of moral self-scrutiny encouraged by the Puritan divines of New England; Grade and his lacerating Musarniks would have fascinated the Hawthorne who wrote *The Scarlet Letter* and "The Minister's Black Veil."

Perhaps it will help American readers if I also say a word about Grade in relation to Isaac Bashevis Singer, the one Yiddish writer now popular in this country. Though Grade and Singer seem to deal with similar situations and settings, they are radically different in literary method and their outlooks upon human existence. Singer is a "sport" in Yiddish literature, ill-at-ease with both religious orthodoxy and Yiddish secularism, while Grade, whose whole career bears the weight of the great transformations of modern Jewish life, finds himself emotionally close to, if not in easy intellectual agreement with, both the Yeshiva and the secularists. Singer is essentially a fabulist, enchanted with the marvelous, the perverse, the grotesque, the sly; his fictions always take repose in the melodies of story-telling, always fold into the conveniences and conciliations of fable. Grade has a more unruly sensibility, high-pitched, tormented, in the grip of dilemmas that sometimes tear open the skin of his narrative. Singer is much the greater story-teller, this virtuoso tamer of imps, devils and gentiles; Grade digs deeper, more earnestly into the rocky soils of moral life. Singer wants to charm us into surrendering to his magic; Grade to force us to share his rages of thought.

This unyielding moral earnestness of Grade's shapes and sometimes limits *The Yeshiva*, a large novel set in Lithuania between the two world wars. Grade tries, not always gracefully, to combine the structure of a social novel, with its multitude of events, and a psychological portrait of a Musarnik caught between the lures of the world and the demands of his ethic. Tsemakh Atlas is a character large in appetite, self-assault, conscience and will. He is quick to anger; he has no patience with the trivia of daily life; he is drawn overwhelmingly to women—their aroma of perfection in all its bright falsity; he is a worldly man with an unworldly soul. He cannot live with the moral passion that drives him, nor without it:

He had never even really wept at prayers, for he considered weeping a kind of passion—he was disgusted by the man

who indulged himself with tears of self-pity. From his lips came no songs of praise or thanksgiving. He knew only one melody, the melancholy Musar melody, which cut pieces of flesh from one's body. Instead of feeling joy of soul at prayer, he tormented himself with analysis of soul.

Those portions of the book that offer genre pictures of East European Jewish life seem a little heavy and slap-dash, lacking in novelistic finish, as if Grade were counting too much on the keyed-in responses of his Yiddish audience. But whenever the book turns to the inner life of Tsemakh, it comes entirely alive. Grade is one of those writers who seems most concrete when dealing with the abstract. There are fine passages on the torments and trickeries of ethical self-conquest, the way, for instance, the self can gain a triumph of wickedness through the very denials it exacts from itself. (Again, Hawthorne!) And all this is done without conventional Jewish sentimentalism. If American Jewish readers really took the trouble to know what Grade is writing about, they would turn away from him, since his essential

spirit is much too harsh and abrasive for them.

He is also a problem for his translators. Curt Leviant, so far as I can judge, has handled the religious references with authority, but he has difficulties in sustaining a level of English prose neither oracular nor merely colloquial. It is jarring to have a Yeshiva boy in Lithuania say, "Nuts to you," or to read that old Jews wanted "to be social with their rabbi." (If you "want to be social," you have to be on this side of the Atlantic.) Translating is a heart-breaking business and Leviant has worked with care and frequent effectiveness, but one wishes his ear for English idiom were as precise as Grade's for Yiddish.

Still, this is an engrossing novel. It holds one through its absolute belief that the art of fiction achieves fulfillment in creating a moral universe.

Irving Howe

Irving Howe's most recent book is World of Our Fathers (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich).

Mark Twain Speaking edited by Paul Fatout

(University of Iowa Press: \$22.50)

We treat the emergence of toastmasters like a Stevenson, a Moynihan or a Buckley with such a rapture of the seeming-deep that but one further move remains: to zoo them on the spot, as if they were surprise discoveries, the stragglers of a breed long gone: some moa, dodo, or a greater auk. Mark Twain, who seems to have done more to develop the risky art of the roast than any other man—and then suffered from such embarrassments as the reaction to his 1877 Whittier dinner remarks—was no such rarity. In an age of accomplished public speakers, Mark Twain was simply sensationally better. He did his homework, creating out of hours of oral rehearsal that polished technique we are familiar with through Hal Holbrook's superb mockingbird reincarnation of Mark Twain on stage. In fact, the act of public speaking itself became a favorite lecture topic for Mark Twain: in a tour-de-force of virtuoso artistry, he often drew his audience's attention to the lengthy preparations it took to create the illusion of spontaneity on which his "impromptu" speeches depended, rather

like a magician revealing the secret to a trick even while he astonishes the crowd. Like a one-man version of the Duke and Dauphin operating for the entertainment of the more privileged and educated classes, Mark Twain drew audience attention to the fact that they were being fooled, with their complicity, by imitation folksiness: "The scene portrayed in the theater is a sham, not the reality," he tells them in Australia; "but you compliment the reality by saying that it is a good imitation of the imitation." He was unwittingly foreshadowing a 20th-century literature of self-conscious artifice, and his audiences loved it.

But public speaking was not his only topic; there were any number of subjects in which Mark Twain had an expertise. These included politics, largely the Republican variety (though he cast a Mugwump vote for Cleveland in 1884). "The literary tribe," he reflects at one political meeting, "is not given to bothering about politics" (those were the days); yet Mark Twain was capable of expressing himself knowledgeably, even

obscurely, on such subjects as tariffs and copyright legislation. He was opposed to imperialism, the large-scale presence of Chinese immigrants, the complexities of the German language, and the moral depravity of Frenchmen; and he said so in countless speeches around the world. He talked about the weather and about his travels, and even expressed himself—less than publicly—on the topic of masturbation (he was for it, if you couldn't get better). In most of these cases, the speeches moved easily from one piece of familiar material to another, shining up such gems as the story of his childhood theft of melons that turned out to be green (whereupon he returned them to the farmer, with an appropriate and strenuous complaint) until their rhetorical impact approached the maximum.

Moreover, he made frequent use of narrative matter that had already appeared in certain of his published texts. The bluejay yarn, the story of the

Golden Arm, the tale of the jumping frog; these and passages from *A Connecticut Yankee*, *Huck Finn* and *The Innocents Abroad*: all went into the lecture-tour hopper, and the careful student of Twain's thought will want to examine their metamorphoses from written to oral accounts, and the often subtle shifts of emphasis and style that accompany each change. With incredible stamina, considering the food and drink consumed, as well as the rival oratory listened to, Mark Twain pursued his lengthy career on the public podium; fully half the pages in this collection reprint the speeches made in his last decade of existence, the speaker still developing his materials, still extending his range of interests. India, New Zealand, Great Britain, Bermuda, Canada: whether making his familiar plea for the blood-brotherhood of the English-speaking "race" or embarrassing his daughter Suzy by forgetting not to tell the Golden Arm story at

Bryn Mawr, Mark Twain was balancing the often lonely career of the professional writer with a consistent, if formalized, contact with humanity in multitudes.

Lonely it was, with the traditional male audience offered to the American male writer. Fatout reports that Mark Twain's audiences were nearly always entirely masculine, and that his wit worked best in the absence of

female inhibitions. (He spoke successfully at the Elmira Reformatory, for instance.) What can we imagine him doing, up there courageously telling the young Winston Churchill that, thanks to British policy in South Africa and the American one in the Philippines, the United States and England were now not merely "kin in ideals, kin in just and lofty purposes; and now we are kin in sin . . ."? If not alone with Jim on a raft on the Mississippi, he is at least—hands astride the lectern—the pilot navigating those treacherous shoals and rapids on the River that runs from Lake Itasca to

the sea; he is a man in a man's diminishing environment (women's suffrage is not far off), and scoring tournament points while he is still, unrivalled, Boss.

In choosing a university press for this edition—instead of a commercial publisher—Paul Fatout might have been thought to be yearning after library shelves, instead of coffee tables. Indeed, this collection, with an assortment of proper glossies instead of its single illustration, might have become one of the present season's gift events. But though the page stock is heavy and the sewing firm, *Mark Twain Speaking* could serve either function equally well; its nearly 700 pages of text are a consistent delight, and it comes as a surprise to find—in the appendix record of Mark Twain's public-speaking appearances—that perhaps less than half of those events have been recorded for our reading pleasure. And though their editing is seemingly faultless—correcting along the way a host of dating errors in the prior editions of 1910 and 1923—Fatout does not bother to indicate the ways in which he has made reconstructed "composites" out of various newspaper accounts of Mark Twain's appearances. Why should he, since in effect this is the record of Mark Twain speaking, but rendered by other persons? In the name of the eventual graduate student who will do the eventual dissertation on the "authentic" texts of Mark Twain's public speeches, I must note that this is not in fact a "scholarly" edition. But who cares? Not the readers who will find, instead of the inevitable additional collection of excerpted Twain, the real goods.

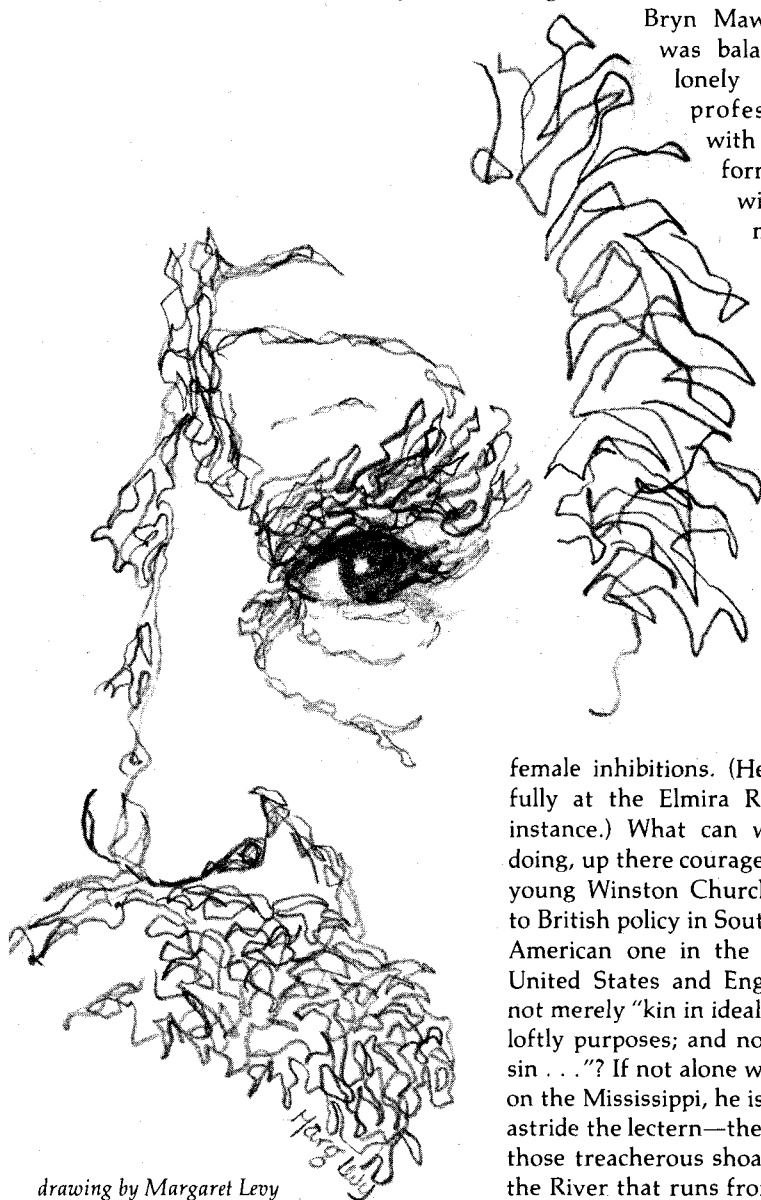
John Ditsky

John Ditsky is professor of English at the University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario.

Organizing the Presidency by Stephen Hess

(Brookings Institution; \$10.95, \$3.95 paper.)

Stephen Hess of The Brookings Institution here joins numerous others who have suggestions for improving the performance of the presidential office. No one will deny that something must be done. Beginning with Roosevelt, who



drawing by Margaret Levy

took on the economy as a problem for presidents to solve, the accumulation of responsibilities in the White House has become so massive that even casual attention to all of them by the president has become impossible. Besides, it has suddenly seemed to have become downright dangerous to trust the national fate to the prejudices, the mistaken assessments, the bad judgment and the amateurish use of force so casually undertaken by a harassed individual.

Roosevelt very early began to see that there must be a change. He had begun with a few old associates from his days as assistant secretary of the Navy. He got along for a while by borrowing from the departments and by informal assignments, but at the end of his first term he had in hand the report of a committee he had appointed to impress the Congress with his needs. This resulted, among a few other changes, in an Executive Office of the President, giving him more assistants and groups of experts for new assignments.

Studies of executive management continued to be made, the most comprehensive being those chaired by ex-President Hoover. The effect, aside from reassignment of some bureaus and other agencies, was to enlarge still more the president's staff and powers. But his responsibilities also continued to increase. In spite of all the elaborate apparatus, what followed was far from satisfactory: Truman's bomb dropping and the Cold War, Eisenhower's neglect of the economy, Kennedy's missile crisis and the Bay of Pigs, Johnson's expansion of involvement in Vietnam, and finally Nixon's Watergate.

Would better organization have made decision-making better? At any rate, the accumulation of disaffections exploded. The Congress, having thrust successive emergencies on the president to handle as best he could, now began to talk about "recovering its powers." The war on poverty dissolved into chaos, and Vietnam became a disaster. The country was in upheaval when Nixon succeeded; and he only made matters worse. Watergate provided the excuse and the smoldering unrest broke into the open.

The subsequent agonies of reassessment, exacerbated by Nixon's exaggerated claims to exclusive powers, did not die down until the Congress laid claims to enlarged powers of its own—including, of all things, a Budget Bureau.

Hess, like some other students, feels that much of this sad history might have been averted if somehow collective

judgment could have been substituted for that of one individual. Presidents, acting alone, he thinks, have been governed by motives that would not have survived in a merged judgment of peers. But how to accomplish such a change within the restrictions of the Constitution? The operative word in his reconstitution of the office being "collectivity," he finds such a body ready at hand. The cabinet, he says, can readily be made into a source of prudence, foresight and wisdom.

This will strike those who are familiar with the history of the presidency as a most unlikely occurrence. Indeed, Hess begins his argument by noting that presidents have always had cabinets but that their collective advice was seldom sought. Presidents concluded that the thoughts of most of them about great affairs of state were hardly more than those of any concerned citizens. When he called them together it was to give the impression of collective decision without allowing himself to be hampered by it. Nonetheless, he argues, the institution is there by tradition, and could be made to serve the purpose of collegiality. Properly organized, and with an efficient staff, it could make executive performance more efficient and decision-making wiser. There are, however, he says, preliminary conditions. Its make-up must be changed to reflect the president's need for advice, its size must be limited, its meetings must be regularly scheduled, it must have a skillful secretariat and it must become the focal point of the White House machinery. Above all, the president must want it to be a respected instrument of advice.

It seems incredible that Hess should not know what is wrong with this prescription, and, indeed, he mentions some of its weaknesses, the most important being that secretaries, immersed in their own domestic duties, will have anything useful to say about financial or foreign affairs; and that they are usually chosen not for ability but to appease a constituency. It was not these prospective weaknesses, however, that persuaded the framers to reject both a plural executive and an advisory council of state. What moved James Wilson to suggest a single executive and the others to agree, was the need to concentrate responsibility. If there were more than one, it was asked, who would be impeachable? Several historians have pointed out that Hamilton and Jefferson disagreed on many things but not on

this. Jefferson, after having argued for plurality for the confederation, was convinced, by observing the directorate in France, that it was a mistake. Hamilton thought that a plural executive, if divided, would lead to factionalism and even anarchy, and, if united, to tyranny.

As to a council of state, it was agreed that a president ought to be able to look for advice wherever it could be found. To limit it to a closed circle would be an undesirable constriction.

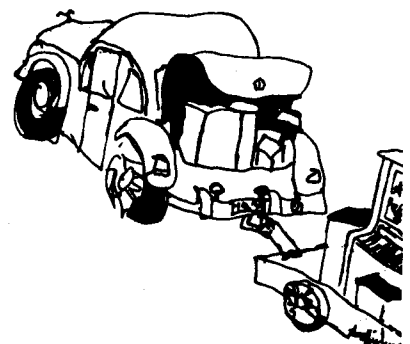
Roosevelt, when New Deal affairs became complicated, did create first an Emergency Council and then an Executive Council, bringing in the heads of new operating agencies; but this was more to improve cohesion than to get advice. He found that, even for this, the scheme did not work. Some 20 or more administrators met, glared at each other, and when they had any important issue to settle, demanded to speak to him

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in private. His successors did not repeat the mistake. The cabinet met regularly in some administrations but not often in others. It was seldom called on for advice.

This perfunctory use of administrative associates by the president was characteristic not only of latter-day incumbents. Washington, it is true, asked his secretaries for both oral and written comments; but he had such superior minds at his table as Hamilton and Jefferson, as well as solid Knox and capable lawyer Randolph. It worked at first but it did not last. Both Jefferson and Hamilton withdrew. Each invariably opposed the arguments of the other.

Neither this, nor examples of later presidents, who felt compelled to conform to an empty tradition, persuades Hess that his prescription has, in effect, already been tried and rejected. But it is quite evident that improvement must be looked for in other ways. There are some, of course, if the problem is appraised with the framers' realism, having in mind the differences between then and now.

Washington inherited three departments and felt no need for more; and now there are perhaps 200 agencies with some claim to presidential attention. The oval room, however, is no larger and the man at its desk still one human being. He cannot do all that he is called on to do. He does re-order

priorities. He soon learns that most of the government's activities do not need to be *managed* by the chief of state. Building highways, doing research, regulating business behavior, supervising welfare—these need only general direction from him. But he must carefully attend to the national security, keep its foreign relations in order, see that it is solvent, and consider high policy with the Congress. There is a division here, growing out of mammoth size and technical complexity. It might be recognized by legitimizing the reassignment of duties. The White House staff has a tendency to supplant the departmental heads. This can be checked and members reduced. But not until the complicated responsibilities are lifted.

This is the problem. Attempting to transform the cabinet into a collegium would not help; but wiser, more responsive performance might result from so simple a reform as giving presidents time to seek and organize advice for the great decisions only he can make. Cities have learned that they can have both a mayor and a city manager. It may be a useful lesson for Washington.

Rexford G. Tugwell

Rexford G. Tugwell is the author of *The Enlargement of the Presidency*, *How They Became President*, *The Brains Trust*, *The Democratic Roosevelt*, and most recently, *Roosevelt's Revolution* (Macmillan).

reminds one of Balzac: All the ingredients are there—ambition, suspicion, hatred and intrigue, even sex, for Bleichroeder, albeit a man of strict principles and rigid working habits, somehow found the time to maintain a liaison with a lady friend who later became an embarrassment and had to be provided for with the utmost discretion. But it is Balzac without the great passions and the stark contrasts; no one ever triumphs entirely, nor are any abject failures.

Among some European historians it has been the fashion in recent years to put the emphasis on what has been called the social-imperialist impulse; previously it used to be the imperialist impulse, *tout court*. They will find little evidence to fortify their thesis in this book, not because Bleichroeder and his fellow bankers were opposed to colonialism and war on moral principle. They simply thought that from a strictly business point of view peace was preferable to war, and that, again thinking as businessmen, Indochina and other such remote places were highly doubtful propositions—hence their Euro-centrism. The story of the house Bleichroeder (unlike the Rothschilds) is very much the story of one man, for after his death the international reputation of the house declined; his children who were ennobled and converted to protestantism played only a marginal role in it, lacking both the father's drive and his extraordinary ability.

Since earliest times, historians have had to face innumerable temptations, among the most common ones are the inclination to attribute to one's chosen topic greater importance than it warrants; the other is the wish to be original and this excellent book does not quite evade either pitfall. In Bismarck's long autobiography Gerson Bleichroeder rates exactly two lines, and this, of course, is quite unfair; the Chancellor was clearly embarrassed by his close association with his Jewish banker. But there is also a danger of going to the other extreme. It seems a little far-fetched to regard Bleichroeder as a man who occupied a capital role in running Germany, who played a major role in shaping it. Bismarck used him, he listened to his advice, but it would be difficult to point to a single major issue, domestic or foreign, in which Bleichroeder's role was of decisive political importance. Bleichroeder's story is indeed fascinating but not because it throws startling new light on the laws of power and decision-making

Gold and Iron by Fritz Stern

(Knopf; \$17.95)

Contrary to popular belief, Bismarck was not entirely preoccupied with German unity to the detriment of all other causes. He never neglected his private finances, ably managed by the banker Gerson Bleichroeder, who was, roughly speaking, Bismarck's contemporary and whose star rose together with the Chancellor's. Bleichroeder began his career as Rothschild's representative in Berlin; he ended it as the head of the most important banking house in the German capital. Bleichroeder helped Bismarck, albeit in a modest way, to sort out the war reparations problem; this refers to Saxony after the war of 1866, and, more important, to France in 1871. He provid-

ed some useful intelligence for Bismarck through his close connections with other international banking houses in the European capitals, and on several occasions he acted as a diplomatic go-between on Bismarck's behalf. Stern's biography is based on Bleichroeder's correspondence with Bismarck on one hand and the Rothschilds on the other; another volume, written by David Landes, will deal with the history of the Bleichroeder bank. Most of this material has never been used before, and the picture that emerges is therefore of unusual interest, not because it leads to a fundamental revision in our image of Bismarck and his era, but for its wealth of illuminating detail. At times it

in Imperial Germany.

The quest for originality among historians takes many forms: In extreme cases (the A.J.P. Taylor syndrome) it is simply to play the gadfly and to take a line radically opposed to one's predecessors. More often, and more subtly, it manifests itself in the search for an overall 'concept'; few self-respecting modern historians believe that they can manage without one. Those specializing in intellectual history may push to the forefront some marginal figure of the past, allegedly neglected; others will detect patterns, symbols and analogues, which (they will claim) decisively contribute to our understanding of hitherto inexplicable phenomena. Prof. Stern tends to see in Bleichroeder the *homme fatale* of German anti-Semitism. In the light of recent German history there has been the tendency to attribute excessive importance to the German anti-Semitism of the last third of the 19th century. This is a question of degree and emphasis, not of principle, for no one has doubted that there was a fair deal of anti-Semitism in Germany at the time. But in France, Austria and Russia it was more rampant in the 1890s than in Germany, and yet it did not lead to the *Endlösung*. Nor should Bleichroeder's personal role in the context of the anti-Semitic campaign of the 1870s be exaggerated: He was one of the targets, not the prime target. Most of the attacks were directed against other Jewish financiers, and above all, against the liberal Jewish politicians of the day, Bamberger and Lasker, who were far more in the limelight. Lastly one should not overdo the torment suffered by Bleichroeder (the 'patriotic parvenu') as the result of various social rebuffs. A post-World-War-II perspective is of little help in understanding Bleichroeder's innermost thoughts of which, as Stern admits, we know very little anyway. We do know, however, that he rose from very modest beginnings to immense wealth and a position of great influence—even though this influence did not extend to policy-making at the highest level. We also know, again to quote the author, that he 'lacked any great delicacy of sentiment.' In the circumstances it is not at all certain whether one may attribute to him feelings of deep mental anguish. He was no doubt disappointed that some of his ambitions were not realized, but his rise, after all, was infinitely more striking than his social setbacks. Once the anti-Semitic wave of the 1870s had passed,

the Jewish question was no longer a central issue in German domestic politics, and German Jews, like those elsewhere in Western Europe, felt reasonably confident about their future. The story of Bleichroeder, to summarize, is sufficiently interesting in

itself; the temptation to regard it as a Brechtian *Lehrstück* should be resisted.

Walter Laqueur

Walter Laqueur's most recent book, *Terrorism*, will be published this year (Little Brown).

The Back of the Book

Don't Change a Hair for Me



Farrah © 1976 Pro Arts Inc. Bionic Woman, 400,-

We're in deep now—the age of sexual freedom—up to our adult book stores with their smokey windows, our Fritz the Cats, *Penthouses*, porno t-shirts, see-through blouses, how-to best sellers, bold rock lyrics, shocking vocabulary, congressional offices, and everywhere else we look, or would like to. All of which is stupid or silly, but suggests a cultural question of supply and demand. Assuming that tantalization is the key to sexuality, that we only crawl for the out-of-reach, then who or what becomes a sex symbol when the picking is free?

According to a lot of people, tens of millions to date, the answer is Farrah Fawcett-Majors. The name alone offers multiple possibilities, from some

defunct India regiment to a group of undergraduates in a vocational college. Add a picture and the dreams expand. Farrah has the glow of a star, the first full-fledged sex queen to emerge from the relatively sex-free medium of television since Dagmar in the '50s.

The picture to add is a poster of Farrah in a red bathing suit which at this writing has sold three million copies to equal numbers of children and the aged for two dollars or \$2.50 apiece, and is expected to sell 10 million. In comparison Raquel Welch's poster has sold two million copies, Marilyn Monroe 1.5, Betty Grable 1.5, and Lindsay Wagner, the

Bionic Woman, 400,-000. A poster of Lee Majors, the Six Million Dollar Man and the husband of Farrah, has sold 500,000 copies, which might make for some nasty domestic competitiveness in a less valuable fellow. But Majors is evidently as happy as the rest of America to hail Farrah, who besides the poster earns a living from ads for Noxzema shave cream (for which she plays a character called "Creamy"), Mercury Cougars, Wella Balsam conditioning shampoo, and Vic Tanny health clubs. She also is one of "Charlie's Angels," the year's highest-rated TV show about three young women who are ordered to solve crimes by John Forsythe's voice. Farrah has been on the covers of *Time* and *People*; and in the

week of February 15 alone was on the tabloid covers of *Midnight*, *The Star* and *The National Enquirer*. Why?

In 10 years at the outs Farrah Fawcett-Majors will be the answer in a trivia quiz or an entry in one of Richard Lamparski's *Whatever Became of . . . ?* series, an Irish McCalla, a Cobina Wright, Jr., or, God willing, a Margaux Hemingway. For the magical moment, however, she is America's pin-up girl, gracing teenagers' bedrooms instead of GI's lockers, and satisfying some inarticulate desires other than our wish to gaze on just another pretty face. Professor Ray Browne of the Popular Culture department of Bowling Green University told *The Star* it's the hair: "It's sort of wind-blown and free spirited. But it is a safe sort of free spirit, because the role she plays on TV represents law and order" (a blow to Kojak). Farrah says she's popular because she doesn't wear a bra. Dr. Alan Rosenberg, "prominent New York psychiatrist," told *The National Enquirer* that "innocence and bold abandon are the wildest combination sexually to a man. These two factors, which Farrah has, are enough to make America go bananas."

Psychiatric terms notwithstanding, it is astounding to think of 10 million poster-buyers, of 50 million weekly viewers, of who-knows-how-many Mercury drivers and Noxzema shavers, and of sponsors paying \$100,000 per minute to be seen with Farrah. The reason, I think, is that Farrah is not sexy, which in response to her eurythmic form, the poster, and the various wet suits in which she poses might sound like an insult. But if this age of ours is as sexually free as it claims, it makes sense to choose an America's Sweetheart who has something other than mere sexuality to commend her. What Farrah has is comedy, comedy built on sex to be sure, but comedy (not wit, not humor) nevertheless.

Long before the advent of Farrah subtler actresses realized that comedy and sexuality could complement each other. Veronica Lake was a very funny performer. Carole Lombard was witty, not broadly funny, yet as sexually exciting as they come. Jean Arthur's voice was more erotic in *The Devil and Miss Jones* than anything in *The Devil in Miss Jones*, its X-rated namesake. Marilyn Monroe actually became sexy when she started to parody herself in *The Seven Year Itch* and *Some Like It Hot*, as did Ann-Margaret in *Carnal Knowledge*.

For a sex queen self-parody involves

as much mockery of the observer as the observed, because the exaggerated teeth and bottoms are meant to embarrass as well as tease, and ease disgrace by making it community property. Only a country deeply embarrassed by sex would put naked girls on calendars—it's *really functional, you see*. The embarrassment is funny, and our sex queens, the best of them, instead of being sources of allure, are always inflated out of reach like Thanksgiving Day balloons, preposterous metaphors of our sly desires, which in fact are as obvious as teeth and bottoms themselves.

When someone like Farrah comes along, then, we have a spot open for her, a cultural zone where we house our most high-priced clichés. Farrah has teeth and a bottom, and her celebrated hair looks like a cartoon of hair, which is appropriate for comedy. But her most appealing comic attribute is that she takes it easy on us, playing the exact opposite of a *belle dame sans merci*, not a Carmen or a Salammô, not the European Fatal Woman to lead us through a romantic agony, but as *Time* describes her, "a warm, giggly sort of girl," who implies, as Mae West used to hum aloud, *Come on boys; sex won't kill you*. It's an assurance we cannot hear too often.

What constitutes sexuality in an age of sexual freedom? The same thing it always did, only more so. The greater the freedom, the greater the fear. The greater the fear, the louder the laugh. So here's Farrah, not witty like Lombard, nor humorous like West or Monroe, but just as funny in her fashion. She doesn't crack jokes; she is one—sitting pretty at pool side, tossing back her celestial curls, and flashing those choppers at millions of boys who, as ever, will wink, hoot, whistle, and elbow each other in the ribs, but will never come up to see her sometime.

Roger Rosenblatt

TRB, from page 2

are 22 pages of newspaper clippings in fine print describing the consequences of illegals in various "impact areas" of the US. Sample: *New York Times*, December 30, 1974—"Half of 210 arrested in 1973 in connection with an international cocaine smuggling operation were illegals living and working in

NYC area; estimated six to 10 percent of city jails' 7300 inmates are illegal."

Another report with an element of comedy has just come from the expiring "National Commission on Supplies and Shortages," a group which few people knew existed. Its suite of 15 to 20 rooms with heavy beige carpeting in a modern downtown building is up for rent and its staff of two dozen or so professionals is scattering. It expires this month.

Here again the genesis of the commission goes back vaguely to food and shortages and what man does when his Earth gets over-crowded.

In 1974 Senators Mansfield and Scott, then respectively majority and minority leaders of the upper chamber, were shocked at oil and other shortages and felt that some kind of early-warning system should be created.

"Planning" is a dirty word in Washington—it suggests state interference in free enterprise—but surely the government needs some agency to peer into the future and locate crises before they happen? After a year's delay President Ford picked the five public members of the 13-member commission created by Congress (plus four congressmen and four administration officials). Donald Rice, president of the Rand Corporation, became chairman.

Now it turns out from the 211-page report (released Jan. 10) that our danger is a "shortage mentality," not shortages. There may be "short-run shocks" but there is "no serious long-run problem of resource availability, provided that new energy sources are developed, technological advances continue, and the rate of increase in population is brought under control within the next few decades." Put that in your pipe, Club of Rome!

This airy confidence from a commission that included Jerry Ford's four most conservative economic advisers—Greenspan, Simon, Seidman and Lynn—is somewhat reduced when we find that the commission defines "long-run" as only 25 years (there will be 150-million Mexicans by then). Also there is that little caveat that "population is brought under control," and one about "new energy sources" being developed.

Oh, well, nobody is going to take the report very seriously. Nat Weinberg, at the United Auto Workers, the maverick on the commission, wrote a first-rate 93-page supplementary comment advocating Humphrey-Hawkins-style government planning. And the whole thing cost only about a million and a half dollars.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
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I am one of Andrew Young's admirers. Though he may not much like the analogy, he seems to me to be doing as UN ambassador precisely what Pat Moynihan did: making the post a platform for heresy—or, as Mary McGrory put it, rattling the teacups. When that happens in the salons of diplomacy, it's almost always a good thing. Not all of his controversial remarks have been wise, however. And one of them was simply smart-assed: "I can get along with the hard-line white leaders. The only South African I can't get along with is Helen Suzman . . . I can't stand paternal liberalism." A parliamentarian of enormous courage, Mrs. Suzman has been the single most eloquent white voice against apartheid in South Africa. And her eloquence does not entail preaching to black people; she is not prone to advising them on their own good. But when she speaks to hostile white audiences she often tells them, "It is for you too that the freedom of blacks must be secured." That is not paternalism toward blacks. And if Andy Young can't get along with Helen Suzman, it's not her fault but his.

"This Happy Land" was the headline over the first column by William Safire to appear after it was announced that he was to be paid \$1,375,000 for the paperback rights to his first novel. "These are good times," he wrote. "Now we must learn to cope with some of the sadness of success." I wish him luck.

I am entirely in sympathy with those who are protesting against the US Circuit Court of Appeals, which has ordered that work should be stopped on the new dam on the Little Tennessee River—90 percent completed—because it will endanger the Snail Darter, a three-inch fish which is said to exist only in a 17-mile section of the river. The Tennessee Valley Authority, which is going to appeal to the Supreme Court, says that no one had heard of the Snail Darter until 1973, surely a case of where ignorance is bliss. Some scientists in Britain claim that the glow worm is endangered, because the glow of the female worm is meant to attract the male worm, but the male worms are now responding to the glow of electric lights and futilely exhausting themselves trying to inseminate the

light bulbs. Are we therefore to live in darkness, because a male glow worm cannot tell a female glow worm from an electric light? Frankly, I don't care a damn about the Snail Darter; and will the Concerned Citizens for Snail Darters please write elsewhere?

Not only has no one been able to raise any objection to the appointment of Admiral Stansfield Turner as director of the CIA, but every verdict seems to be positive, except for one silly editorial in *The New York Times* which asked if a military man was suitable for the job. He indeed seems a remarkable man, not least in his awareness of the place of the military in a civil society. We have to cease being surprised that military people can read. As one of the most experienced political reporters in Washington said to me the other day; "They are probably the most maligned group of people in the country today." What is more, there is a remarkable younger group of officers now taking command who learned a lot in Vietnam (which was not their fault). It was Moshe Dayan who said that out of the Vietnam war the United States might at last get a superb professional armed service: judging by many I have met, he may be right.

Since I have never believed in the myth of the Sunbelt, stretching all the way from California, through the Southwest and the South to Florida, I was interested to see this week that a little reality was talked at an important conference at Austin last week. Steven C. McDonald, a distinguished petroleum economist, said that in 20 or 30 years "the oil and gas of the Southwest will be gone and the shift will then be to the West (with its coal), and to Alaska (with its oil)." Within 50 years, he said, the Southwest would go into a period of decline. I don't believe this forecast any more than I believe any others, but it is at least valuable to be reminded how fragile myths like that of the Sunbelt really are. To judge by the way they have been talking, Ronald Reagan and his supporters still seem to believe that the rainbow ends with a pot of gold for them down there in the Southwest. They had better look again.

It happens all over the country, but the shock is no less each time. Last Friday

when I walked to the office, I passed a familiar group of town houses on a corner only a block away. On Sunday when I walked to the office, the houses had disappeared and there was a mountain of rubble. I thought that the destruction of downtown Washington had stopped, but it goes on: another meaningless office building. But who am I to complain? *The New Republic* used to occupy a town house up the street; now it houses itself in a building with convenience but no memory, and with windows only for the privileged.

There can be no doubt that the decisions of the Cambridge City Council last week to impose strict safety regulations on genetic research at Harvard and MIT, although it is the first of its kind in the country, will not be the last. The vote was unanimous, and the limitations which the council has imposed are detailed. It banned altogether one kind of research that the National Institutes of Health had merely ruled should be conducted in a space enclosed by air and shower chambers. Without taking sides here—my instinct is to resist almost all interference with research—I have no doubt that such issues are going to become more and more matters of public policy. Biochemistry is really only in its infancy. It has received a tremendous impetus in recent years, since many brilliant physicists, believing that the possibilities of further exploration in their own field were exhausted, took their methods and skills into the field of biochemistry. One day soon, the whole question will land on the President's desk, and not go away.

A friend was at a dinner in Washington recently at which J. William Fulbright also was a guest. Apparently the former chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee dominated the conversation over the brandy and coffee as much as ever. In the rather superior voice with which we all used to be so familiar, he dismissed the names of almost anyone who holds any office, from Daniel Patrick Moynihan to Andrew Young, which is quite a spread. My friend said that he knew how valuable Fulbright had been but—he searched for his phrase until he expostulated—"I just wish that he didn't always sound like the Bactrian camel which alone knows the hundredth name of God."

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